San José State University  
Humanities 190: Senior Seminar  
The Neuroscience of Education

Instructor: Tova Cooper
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Email: tova.cooper@sjsu.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-10, & Fridays, 8-9:30
Class Days/Time: Fridays 10:00-12:45
Classroom: Dudley Moorhead Hall 354
Prerequisites: 100W completed or concurrent enrollment
Class Website: Canvas login: http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/canvas/index.html

Course Description
This capstone course is for majors and minors in Humanities and Liberal Studies. In the course, we will study developments in the field of education, particularly in the field of educational neuroscience, also known as MBE—Mind, Brain, and Education. In this course, students will consider their own experience in higher education, and they also will propose and pursue an interdisciplinary research project on a topic of their choice (one that is still within the thematic parameters of the course).

Relevant Humanities Program Learning Objectives (PLOs)
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate:

1) the ability to frame questions and pursue answers to aesthetic, social, cultural and global problems using interdisciplinary methods.
2) skill in written, visual and verbal communication, including argumentation.
3) the ability to identify, select, use, and cite information sources appropriately.

Additional Course Learning Objectives (CLOs)
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
4) demonstrate the ability to identify a research problem, and effectively design and execute an interdisciplinary research strategy using multiple humanities and/or social science methods.

5) demonstrate skills in critical and creative thinking.

6) demonstrate scholarly concern for their work, i.e.: show concern for excellence in inquiry and argumentation; exhibit the ability to critically reflect on and improve their work; and so on.

7) collaborate productively with peers and the professor.

8) connect their personal educational journey to larger intellectual and social trends in education and responsibilities in their future work.

**Required Texts**


Any bibliographic reference manual (can be one found online)

**Course Requirements and Grading**

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in University Policy S12-3 at [http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf)

- 15% Quickwrites and Reading Response Essays (LOs 5,6,8)
- 5% Group Teaching Workshop (LOs 2,7)
- 5% Educational Autoethnography
- 15% Midterm Exam (LOs 2,5,6)
- 35% Research Paper (LOs 1-7)
- 10% Oral and Visual Presentation (LOs 1-6)
- 15% Class Participation (LOs 2,5,7,8)

**Quickwrites and Reading Response Essays (15%)**

Prompts will be provided in advance of the class (for reading response essays) or at the beginning of class (for quickwrites). In both cases, prompts will ask you to think critically and creatively about the readings. Reading Response Essays should be between 400-600 words.
Group Teaching Workshop (5%)
Students will work in groups to create and deliver a workshop on course readings. Each group will be responsible for presenting information from the week’s reading and facilitating its discussion. This means the group must 1) explain (and illustrate with examples) the reading material; 2) interpret the content through personal experience (either at the university or elsewhere) and 3) raise questions relating to the group’s analysis of 1 and 2. Each student will prepare these pieces alone, but will spend ½ hour at the beginning of class working with other members of the group to create an active conversation that involves the entire class. This should include a combination of direct instruction and interactive activities. Each group will have 20 minutes.
NOTE: You will need to turn in the “working notes” you used to prepare the workshop.

Educational Autoethnography (5%)
Students will explore the impact and meaning of their university experience in a brief essay early on in the semester. The purpose is to practice self-reflexivity and to analyze the role of higher education in the individual student’s life, as well as in society.

Midterm Exam (15%)
During the semester, there will be a midterm covering the readings and class discussions.

Research Paper (35%)
Each student will identify a research problem; design and execute a research strategy that includes analysis of relevant sources; and compose an original 15-20 page argument. In the weeks and months prior to the due date of the research paper, students will meet with the professor and in groups to work on their research topics. Along the way, students will turn in: 1) a statement of their research problem/question; 2) a prospectus; 3) an annotated bibliography on primary and secondary sources; and 4) a detailed outline of the research paper OR a first draft of the research paper. This latter assignment is not graded. However, if it is not completed, there will be 15% grade reduction from your final paper.

Oral and Visual Presentation (10%)
Students will orally and visually present their research in a formal 10-12 minute presentation in front of the class, with visual aids, at the end of the semester. Students will be held to professional standards.

Class Participation (15%)
The course is designed to create a community in which all members are teachers and learners. Responsible participation from everyone in the community is required.
These are the expectations for class participation:
• Be on time
• Attend all scheduled class sessions for the entire length of the class period
• Be prepared to participate by doing the readings and assignments, thinking about the topics in advance, writing down comments or questions, and sharing reactions with the class.
Spring 2017

- Specifically, each week, you should bring in a comment about one aspect of the reading, which you will share with the class, or a question about something you either did not understand or would like to explore in class discussion.

**Assignment Procedures**

Coursework involves reading, writing (both reflective and analytical), and presentations. It will rely heavily on class discussion and group work. All assignments should be turned in at the beginning of the class in which they are due. Per SJSU policy, I will accept late papers with no grade reduction in the case of a documented medical problem (e.g., a doctor’s note) or a documented bereavement.

All text-based assignments **must be typed** to be accepted. In this course, both the quality of your writing and the quality of the ideas matter. All student writing should be characterized by correct spelling, grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs. Assignments must be handed in at the beginning of the class in which they are due.

**A note on revision:** The best writing comes from a process that includes revision. I strongly recommend approaching each piece of writing you do for this (and any other) class as a process. What I mean by this is that you should NOT quickly complete an assignment the night before it is due, print it out, and turn it in. Instead, you should give yourself time to write and revise a draft; perhaps share it with someone to get feedback (you can always email me a draft if you don’t have anyone else to share it with); further revise after reading the paper out loud; and finally, print out the paper to proofread it one final time—before printing out the copy you will turn in.

**Course Feedback**

Your feedback on any aspect of this course is always welcome. Please contact me by emailing or calling; stopping by my office during office hours; or setting up an appointment to meet.

**University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information web page at [http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/)
# Hum 190 Class Calendar

*Do not use a hardcopy of this schedule to guide your planning, as this schedule is subject to change with fair warning.* All updates and modifications will appear ON OUR CANVAS HOME PAGE. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out *from a classmate* any information that might be relevant to the schedule. The readings and assignments are due on the day they are listed. All readings are in the Course Reader, unless location otherwise noted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics &amp; In-Class</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments</th>
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</table>
| 1    | 1/27   | For the first day of class, please read Chris Frith, *Making Up the Mind,* Prologue Introductions; Research Methods and Critical Writing | HOMEWORK  
**Read:** Andrew Curran, *The Little Book of Big Stuff About the Brain*  
**Upload:** Reading Response Essay #1 |
| 2    | 2/3    | *Introducing: The Brain* | HOMEWORK  
**Read:**  
*Chris Frith, *Making Up the Mind,* Part I, pages 21-81  
| 3    | 2/10   | *Quickwrite & Discussion of Frith*  
*Introduction to writing an Autoethnography* | HOMEWORK  
**Read:**  
*Chris Frith, Chapter 4, pages 85-110  
Goswami, “Neuroscience and Education,” pages 30-47 in Jossey-Bass Reader  
Bruer, “In Search of...Brain-Based Education,” pp. 51-69 (Jossey-Bass Reader)  
**Upload:** Reading Response Essay #2 |
| 4    | 2/17   | *Issues in Brain- | HOMEWORK  
**Read:** |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>5/24</td>
<td>Draft: Begin drafting your autoethnography</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>HOMEWORK Read: The Feeling Brain (Part Four, Jossey-Bass Reader), pp. 183-225</td>
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### Spring 2017

- **Based Education**
  - Group 1 Presentation

- **Issues in Brain-Based Education, continued**

- **Quickwrite**
  - The Role of Emotion & Intuition in Learning
  - Group 2 Presentation
  - Due: Educational Autoethnography

- **The Exceptional Brain**
  - Introduction to the Research Project: Finding a Topic, Sources, and Methods
  - Group 3 Presentation

### HOMEWORK

- **Read:**
  - Chris Frith, Chapter 5, pages 111-138
  - Chris Frith, Chapter 6, pages 139-159
  - Jensen, “Exploring Exceptional Brains,” pages 385-404
  - Grandin, “The Great Continuum,” pages 413-432
  - Ramachandran, “Broken Mirrors,” pages 435-443
  - Sousa, “The Brain and the Arts,” pages 331-355

### Upload:

- Reading Response Essay #3
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<th>Week</th>
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| 8    | 3/17 | *Quickwrite  
*How We Learn & Remember  
*Group 4 presentation  
Due: Research Problem/Question and Tentative Thesis Statement (Bring 2 hard copies to class and submit online) |
| 9    | 3/24 | *Midterm Exam Review  
*Examining the Quality of Arguments |
| 10   | 4/7  | Midterm Exam in class today  
*Individual Meeting with Professor should be completed by the end of this week |
| 12   | 4/21 | *Prospectus Workshop  
*Finding and Using Sources |

**HOMEWORK**  
**Read:**  
Chris Frith, Chapter 7, pages 163-183.  
From Jossey-Bass Reader:  
Shaywitz, “Why Some Smart People Can’t Read,” pp. 242-250  
Dehaene, “Small Heads for Big Calculations,” pages 273-299  
**Upload:** Reading Response Essay #4  
**HOMEWORK**  
**Read:** Rulebook for Arguments, Chapters 1-4  
**Draft:** Prospectus (including a revised thesis statement)  
**Research:** Sources  
**HOMEWORK**  
**Read:** Rulebook for Arguments, Chapters 5-8  
**Finalize and upload:** Annotated Bibliography
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4/28</td>
<td>*Argument and Analysis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>*Introductions and Conclusions, *Presentations, Day 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>5/12</td>
<td>*Presentations, Day 2</td>
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