

UCLA Fiat Lux Seminar

Where the !*%@ Am I?: Development of Spatial Cognition
Psych 19, Seminar 3 (1.0 unit)

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Class Location: 6461 Franz Hall

Class Day, Time: Wed., 12:00-12:50

When you first arrive at UCLA, finding your way around can be challenging. (How do I get to Ackerman Union? And where did my dorm disappear to anyway?) But you quickly learn where things are, becoming so adept at navigating space that you can instantly compute the shortest route between Wooden Center and that place that sells cheap ice cream sandwiches off campus--without ever looking at a map. Yet what's easy for college freshmen is hard for young children. Understanding spatial language (north, right, middle) and using spatial landmarks (next to Bruin Bear) are complex skills that take many years for children to master. This seminar is an overview of children's development of spatial cognition, with an emphasis on development across diverse populations. Students will examine how factors such as culture, gender, blindness, deafness, and developmental delay affect how people learn to navigate the world and have hands-on experience conducting spatial development research.

Graded Materials:

- Participation in class discussion
 - Assigned reading should be completed prior to the day for which they are assigned. Students should come to class prepared to discuss readings.
- 3 written assignments:
 - One assignment is designated for each week of discussion. Students can choose any three of the six available assignments and write a short, 1-2 page paper on the topic. If applicable, students should include a picture documenting their participation in the assigned activity. Assignments are due on the day of the class for which they are assigned.
- Participation in observing and running a spatial experiment with young children
 - Each student should sign up for two experiment hours.

Course Schedule:

Day	Topic	Reading	Assignment
9/30/09	Course Overview Scavenger Hunt		
10/7/09	Multiple Ways to Navigate Space	Uttal, Sandstrom & Newcombe (2006)	Analyze a video game in terms of spatial navigation.
10/14/09	Linguistic Relativity (How the language you speak affects the way you use space)	Munnich & Landau (2003)	Interview someone who speaks another language about space in both languages.

10/21/09	The Effect of Language Cues on the Use of Space Introduction to Study	Loewenstein & Gentner (2005)	Design a spatial cognition study.
10/28/09	Maps & Mental Models	DeLoache (2004)	Draw your mental model of a location, then visit the location and draw a map. Compare the two.
11/4/09	Gender & Spatial Cognition	Lawton (1994)	Ask 3 men and 3 women for directions from the same location to the same location. Compare the responses.
11/11/09	Holiday, No Class		
11/18/09	Space & the Senses	Bigelow (1996)	Wear a blindfold and earplugs and navigate your home for one hour. Document your experience.
11/25/09	Holiday, No Class		
12/2/09	Developmental Delay Course Wrap-up	Phillips, Jarrold, Baddeley, Grant & Karmiloff-Smith (2004)	