Spring 2004; PSY 318: Belief in "Weird" Things
TR 9:30 – 10:45; Rm 284 Eberhart Bldg

Dr. Michael J. Kane, Dept. of Psychology
291A Eberhart, 256-1022; mjkane@uncg.edu; Office Hours by appointment

Course Description

We will focus on two related themes in this course: (1) Beliefs, including those about "weird" things, arise from the normal workings of the human mind. Our cognitive processing systems normally serve us extremely well, but under some circumstances, the way our mind works allows illusions and errors in reasoning, remembering, and perceiving. Furthermore, these illusions and errors play a powerful role in what and how we believe – even when contradicted by objective evidence. (2) A rational, skeptical, and scientific approach is useful for evaluating truth claims of all sorts in everyday life, including those about "weird" things. Science not only uncovers the secrets of the human genome and the composition of stars, but it is also the best tool that humanity has developed for determining whether anything that you learn, experience, think, or believe is likely to be true.

Among the ideas and beliefs we will analyze scientifically and skeptically in this course will be astrology (and other forms of divination), communication with the dead, creation science and intelligent design, extrasensory perception and psychic ability, UFOs as "flying saucers" and abductors of humans, and alternative medical therapies.

At the completion of this course, my goals are that you will have a deeper understanding of: (1) the scientific method and how it can be used as a tool to test ordinary and extraordinary claims about human behavior; (2) how individuals' experiences and beliefs are influenced by the context in which they were derived; (3) how to critically evaluate your own beliefs, as well as others' arguments and claims about human behavior, such as those that appear in scientific or popular media; (4) why psychologists find the study of human thought and behavior so fascinating.

This class may be especially valuable to those students interested in the fields of education, health and medicine, journalism, law and criminal justice, philosophy, psychology, religion, science, and sociology. My ultimate goal is to help make you wiser consumers of information, propaganda, technology, and medical and scientific findings, thus making you more responsible and healthy world citizens.

Grades

Your grade will be determined entirely by 4 exams, which will be composed of multiple-choice questions. Three exams will be given during the semester, and each will count 22% toward your final grade. The final exam is cumulative, covering all the material from the course, and it will count as 34% of your final grade. Note that I do not grade "on a curve," so your grade is your grade and your classmates' scores do not influence it; you should therefore feel free to help and study with each other. Each exam may be made up of a different number of questions and/or points, so your grade on each exam will be a percentage correct score:

A: 100 to 90%; B: 89 to 80%; C: 79 to 70%; D: 69 to 60%; F: 59% and below.

Grades (continued)

Plusses and minuses for final grade averages will be given as follows: 89/90 = A-; 87/88 = B+; 79/80 = B-; 77/78 = C+; 69/70 = C-; 67/68 = D+.

The ***Final Exam*** is scheduled for ***Tuesday, 5/6 at 8:00 am***. Students with more than two examinations within 24 hours may apply to the University Registrar's Office, 180 Mossman Building, for permission to change their exam schedules. The usual policy is to change the middle examination in a sequence of three.

Make-Ups

In order to have the opportunity to take a make-up exam, you must provide me with *written documentation* of an illness or an emergency. I then will determine whether your absence is excused. Non-emergency travel, for example, does not qualify as an excused absence. If your absence is excused, then a make-up test may be arranged at a mutually convenient time, but before the exams are returned to the rest of the class (which will always be the next class meeting). If you cannot take a make-up before the next class meeting, then your grade on the final exam will also count for the grade on the exam you missed.

Extra Credit

There will be two extra credit opportunities. Each involves reading one of the two controversial articles for this course that are available on electronic reserve and writing a 3-page (double-spaced) response to it. You can take any position that you like regarding these articles; I require only that your response be thoughtful and as rational and evidence-based as possible. You may turn in one or both of these response papers any time between 4/15 and the final exam (5/6 at 8am). Adequate completion of each response paper will add 10% to your lowest in-semester exam grade (i.e., your lowest grade for Exams 1 – 3).

Attendance

Attending class is *strongly* advised, but not mandatory. I very much encourage you to attend every class. First of all, I hope it will be interesting and useful to you in understanding the course material. Second, I will often lecture on material that is not in the texts, and my lecture material will be important on exams. Thus, poor attendance will very likely lead to a poor grade, but it is your choice as an adult.

Arriving late or leaving before class is over is distracting to your classmates – please don't do it. If you know that you will have to leave class early for an important reason one day, it is considered polite to tell me in advance and sit near an exit to minimize disturbance.

If you carry a cell phone, please turn it off when you come to class. If there is some compelling reason why you need to leave it turned on one day, please come and discuss it with me.

Cheating

As a preventive measure, this class will follow the UNCG policy on cheating. A copy of this policy i.e., the *Student Code of Conduct*, see: *http://saf.dept.uncg.edu/studiscp/Manual.html*
I take cheating very seriously, so please don't do it in my class. During exams:

1) *All written material must be out of sight, whether it belongs to you or not*.
2) *Calculators, computers & personal stereos must be put away*
3) *Baseball caps must be worn backwards*.

Dropping/Withdrawal

The University policy on withdrawal will be followed (see page 38 of the Undergraduate Bulletin 2003-2004, or see:
www.uncg.edu/reg/Catalog/current/AcaRegs/CourseSelection.html#dropping.
The last date to drop this course without academic penalty is ***Wednesday, 3/17***.

Readings

There are three required texts for the course. Each class meeting listed in the *Tentative Semester Schedule* below has corresponding readings assigned, represented by abbreviations of the authors' names and the chapter numbers (note that page numbers in *italics* indicate that only this portion of the chapter is required). *Please do NOT leave all your reading until just before the exam; you will not have time to complete them*.

Required texts:

1) Stanovich (2004). How to think straight about psychology (7th ed.).
2) Ruscio. (2002). Clear thinking with psychology.
3) Hines (2003). Pseudoscience and the paranormal (2nd ed.).

Semester Schedule – Topics, Readings, & Exams

Day	Date	Material	Corresponding Readings
Tue	1/13	Introduction, Syllabus & Belief Q's	
Thu	1/15	Science, Skepticism & Clear Thinking	Stan (1 & 2)
Tue	1/20	Science, Skepticism & Clear Thinking	Rusc (8)
Thu	1/22	Association, Correlation, and Causation	Rusc (7) & Stan (5)
Tue	1/27	Control, Experiment, and Causation	Stan (6)
Thu	1/29	Science or Pseudoscience?	Rusc (1; *pp. 1 – 10*) & Hines (1)
Tue	2/3	Science or Pseudoscience?	*Video: "Prisoners of Silence"*
Thu	2/5	*Creation "Science" as Pseudoscience*	Hines (13; *pp. 407 – 412)*
Tue	2/10	*Creation "Science" as Pseudoscience*	
Thu	2/12	***EXAMINATION 1***	
Tue	2/17	Review Exam 1	
Thu	2/19	Self-Deception & Belief: Testimonials	Rusc (5) & Stan (4)
Tue	2/24	Self-Deception & Belief: Media Paradox	Rusc (9)
Thu	2/26	Self-Deception & Belief: Plausibility	Rusc (6)

Semester Schedule – Topics, Readings, & Exams (cont.)

Day	Date	Material	Corresponding Readings
Thu	3/2	*Alternative Medicine & Healing*	Hines (10)
Thu	3/4	*Alternative Medicine & Healing*	Hines (11)
Tue	3/9	***Spring Break: No class***	
Thu	3/11	***Spring Break: No class***	
Tue	3/16	*UFOs and Alien Abductions*	Hines (7)
Thu	3/18	*UFOs and Alien Abuctions*	Hines (8)
Tue	3/23	***EXAMINATION 2***	
Thu	3/25	Review Exam 2	
Tue	3/30	Cognitive Illusions, Biases & Belief	Rusc (10)
Thu	4/1	Probability, Coincidence & Belief	Stan (10)
Tue	4/6	Probability, Coincidence & Belief	Stan (11; *pp 153 – 164*)
Thu	4/8	*Astrology & Divination*	Hines (6)
Tue	4/13	*Astrology & Divination*	Hines (13; *pp. 424 – 432*)
Thu	4/15	*Spirits, Channeling, & Psychics*	Hines (2) & (10)
Tue	4/20	*Parapsychology & ESP*	Hines (4)
Thu	4/22	***EXAMINATION 3***	
Tue	4/27	Review Exam 3 & Belief Q's	
Thu	4/29	***MPA Conference: No class***	
Thu	5/6	***FINAL EXAMINATION at 8:00 am***	

Fall 2005; PSY 318: Belief in "Weird" Things
TR 3:30 – 4:45; Rm 284 Eberhart Bldg

Dr. Michael J. Kane, Dept. of Psychology
291A Eberhart, 256-1022; mjkane@uncg.edu; Office Hours by appointment

Course Description

We will focus on two related themes in this course: (1) Beliefs, including those about "weird" things, arise from the normal workings of the human mind. Our cognitive processing systems normally serve us extremely well, but under some circumstances, the way our mind works allows illusions and errors in reasoning, remembering, and perceiving. Furthermore, these illusions and errors play a powerful role in what and how we believe – even when contradicted by objective evidence. (2) A rational, skeptical, and scientific approach is useful for evaluating truth claims of all sorts in everyday life, including those about "weird" things. Science not only uncovers the secrets of the human genome and the composition of stars, but it is also the best tool that humanity has developed for determining whether anything that you learn, experience, think, or believe is likely to be true.

Among the ideas and beliefs we will analyze scientifically and skeptically in this course will be astrology (and other forms of divining personality and future events), communication with the dead, "creation science" and "intelligent design", extrasensory perception and psychic ability, UFOs as alien spacecraft and abductors of humans, and "alternative" medical therapies.

At the completion of this course, my goals are that you will have a deeper understanding of: (1) the scientific method and how it can be used as a tool to test ordinary and extraordinary claims about human behavior; (2) how individuals' experiences and beliefs are influenced by the context in which they were derived; (3) how to critically evaluate your own beliefs, as well as others' arguments and claims about human behavior, such as those that appear in scientific or popular media; (4) why psychologists find the study of human thought and behavior so fascinating.

This class may be especially valuable to those students interested in the fields of anthropology, education, health and medicine, journalism, law and criminal justice, philosophy, psychology, religion, science, and sociology. My ultimate goal is to help make you wiser consumers of information, propaganda, technology, and medical and scientific findings, thus making you more responsible and healthy citizens.

Grades

EXAMS: Your grade will be determined primarily by 3 exams, which will be composed of multiple-choice questions. Three exams will be given during the semester, and your scores on the best ***two*** will count 27% toward your final grade. The final exam is cumulative, covering all the material from the course, and it will count as 36% of your grade. I do not grade "on a curve," so your grade is your grade and your classmates' scores do not influence it; you should therefore feel free to help and study with each other. Each exam may be made up of a different number of questions and/or points, so your grade on each exam will be a percentage correct score:

A: 100 to 90%; B: 89 to 80%; C: 79 to 70%; D: 69 to 60%; F: 59% and below.

Grades (continued)

The ***Final Exam*** is scheduled for ***Thursday, 12/8 at 3:30 pm***. Students with more than two examinations within 24 hours may apply to the University Registrar's Office, 180 Mossman Building, for permission to change their exam schedules. The usual policy is to change the middle examination in a sequence of three.

REACTION PAPERS: The remaining 10% of your grade will be determined by successful completion of 5 short reaction papers to assigned readings. These will be due at various points in the semester (see below for due dates). For each reaction paper, you will be required to read the assigned chapter/article (which I will soon post on Blackboard), many of which are controversial, and write a 3 page, double-spaced response to it (please use 12 point Times font and 1 inch margins). You can take any position that you like regarding these articles; I require only that your response be thoughtful, rational, and evidence-based as possible. For satisfactory completion of each reaction paper, you will receive 2 percentage points; for less satisfactory completion, you will receive only 1 or 0 points. So, satisfactory completion of all 5 papers will give you the remaining 10% points toward your final grade.

FINAL GRADES: Plusses and minuses for final grade averages will be given as follows: 89/90 = A-; 87/88 = B+; 79/80 = B-; 77/78 = C+; 69/70 = C-; 67/68 = D+.

Make-Ups

I do not offer make-up exams. If you miss an exam during the semester, that will serve as the one you drop. If you miss two exams, your final exam score will count as one of your missed exams. Because the final exam is longer and covers much more material than each of the in-semester exams, *I strongly recommend against skipping two exams*!

Extra Credit

The only opportunity will be to help out the PSY 481 lab class by participating in one of their 15-20 minute experiment projects. If you choose to do so, it will add 5% to your lowest of the two in-semester exam grades that count towards your grade.

Attendance

Attending class is *strongly* advised, but not mandatory. I very much encourage you to attend every class. First of all, I hope it will be interesting and useful to you in understanding the course material. Second, I will often lecture on material that is not in the texts, and my lecture material will be important on exams. Thus, poor attendance will very likely lead to a poor grade, but it is your choice as an adult.

Arriving late or leaving before class is over is distracting to your classmates – please don't do it. If you know that you will have to leave class early for an important reason one day, it is considered polite to tell me in advance and sit near an exit to minimize disturbance.

If you carry a cell phone or pager, please turn it off when you come to class. If there is some compelling reason why you need to leave it turned on one day, please come and discuss it with me.

I do not mind, at all, if you wish to audiotape my lectures. If this is helpful to you, please let me know, and you can put your tape recorder on a table in the front of the lecture hall.

Cheating

As a preventive measure, this class will follow the UNCG policy on cheating. A copy of this policy i.e., the *Student Code of Conduct*, see: *http://saf.dept.uncg.edu/studiscp/Manual.html*
I take cheating very seriously, so please don't do it in my class. During exams:

1) *All written material must be out of sight, whether it belongs to you or not*.
2) *Calculators, computers, pagers, cell phones, & personal stereos must be put away*
3) *Baseball caps must be worn backwards*.

Dropping/Withdrawal

The University policy on withdrawal will be followed (see page 38 of the Undergraduate Bulletin 2005-2006, or see:

www.uncg.edu/reg/Catalog/current/AcaRegs/CourseSelection.html#dropping.

The last date to drop this course without academic penalty is ***Friday, 10/7***.

Readings

There are three required texts for the course. Each class meeting listed in the *Tentative Semester Schedule* below has corresponding readings assigned, represented by abbreviations of the authors' names and the chapter numbers (note that page numbers in *italics* indicate that only this portion of the chapter is required). *Please do NOT leave all your reading until just before the exam; you will not have time to complete it*.

Required texts:

1) Stanovich (2004). How to think straight about psychology (7th ed.).
2) Ruscio. (2002). Clear thinking with psychology. *(The 2nd edition just came out in August, with a different title, but too late for us; stick with this 1st edition)*
3) Hines (2003). Pseudoscience and the paranormal (2nd ed.).

Semester Schedule – Topics, Readings, & Exams

Day	Date	Material	Corresponding Readings
Tue	8/16	Introduction, Syllabus & Belief Q's	
Thu	8/18	Science, Skepticism & Clear Thinking	Stan (1 & 2)
Tue	8/23	Science, Skepticism & Clear Thinking	Rusc (8)
Thu	8/25	Association, Correlation, and Causation	Rusc (7) & Stan (5)
Tue	8/30	Control, Experiment, and Causation	Stan (6)
Thu	9/1	Science or Pseudoscience?	Rusc (1; *pp. 1 – 10*) & Hines (1)
Tue	9/6	Science or Pseudoscience?	*Video: "Prisoners of Silence"*
Thu	9/8	*Creation "Science" as Pseudoscience*	Hines (13; *pp. 407 – 412)*
Tue	9/13	*Creation "Science" as Pseudoscience*	
Thu	9/15	***EXAMINATION 1***	
Tue	9/20	Review Exam 1	
Thu	9/22	Self-Deception & Belief: Testimonials	Rusc (5) & Stan (4)
Tue	9/27	Self-Deception & Belief: Media Paradox	Rusc (9)
Thu	9/29	Self-Deception & Belief: Plausibility	Rusc (6)

Semester Schedule – Topics, Readings, & Exams (cont.)

Day	Date	Material	Corresponding Readings
Tue	10/4	*Alternative Medicine & Healing*	Hines (10)
Thu	10/6	*Alternative Medicine & Healing*	Hines (11)
Tue	10/11	***No class: Fall Break***	
Thu	10/13	*UFOs and Alien Abductions*	Hines (7)
Tue	10/18	*UFOs and Alien Abuctions*	Hines (8)
Thu	10/20	***EXAMINATION 2***	
Tue	10/25	Review Exam 2	
Thu	10/27	Cognitive Illusions, Biases & Belief	Rusc (10)
Tue	11/1	Probability, Coincidence & Belief	Stan (10)
Thu	11/3	Probability, Coincidence & Belief	Stan (11; *pp 153 – 164*)
Tue	11/8	*Astrology & Divination*	Hines (6)
Thu	11/10	***No class: Dr. Kane at conference***	
Tue	11/15	*Astrology & Divination*	Hines (13; *pp. 424 – 432*)
Thu	11/17	*Spirits, Channeling, & Psychics*	Hines (2) & (10)
Tue	11/22	*Parapsychology & ESP*	Hines (4)
Thu	11/24	***No class: Thanksgiving holiday***	
Tue	11/29	***EXAMINATION 3***	
Thu	12/1	Review Exam 3 & Belief Q's	
Thu	12/8	***FINAL EXAMINATION at 3:30 pm***	

Reaction Paper Due Dates:

1) **TUES, 9/6**: Levitt, S.D., & Dubner, S.J. (2005). "Where have all the criminals gone?" From Freakonomics (pp. 117-144), HarperCollins.

2) **TUES, 9/22**: Shermer, M. (1997). "In the Beginning: An Evening with Duane T. Gish" and "Science Defended, Science Defined" From Why People Believe Weird Things (pp. 127-136, and 154-172), W.F. Freeman & Company.

3) **THUR, 10/13**: Glassner, B. (1999). "Youth at risk." From The Culture of Fear: Why Americans are Afraid of the Wrong Things (pp. 53-84), Basic Books.

4) **TUES, 11/8**: Chapman, C.R., & Harris, A.W. (2002). "A skeptical look at September 11th: How we can defeat terrorism by reacting to it more rationally", and attached Letters to the Editor in response to the article, and also Chapman/Harris's response to the letters. All from Skeptical Inquirer, vol's 26(5) and 27(1).

5) **THUR, 12/1**: Mullis, K. (1998). "I am a Capricorn." From Dancing Naked in the Mind Field (pp. 143-153), Pantheon Books.

Spring 2008; PSY 318: Belief in "Weird" Things
TR 2:00 – 3:15; Rm 250 Eberhart Bldg

Dr. Michael J. Kane, Dept. of Psychology
263 Eberhart, 256-1022; mjkane@uncg.edu; Office Hours by appointment

Prerequisite:

PSY 121 ***(I reserve the right to drop you from the course if you don't meet this)***

Course Description

We will focus on two related themes in this course: (1) Beliefs, including those about "weird" things, arise from the normal workings of the human mind. Our cognitive processing systems normally serve us extremely well, but under some circumstances, the way our mind works allows illusions and errors in reasoning, remembering, and perceiving. Furthermore, these illusions and errors play a powerful role in what and how we believe – even when contradicted by objective evidence. (2) A rational, skeptical, and scientific approach is useful for evaluating truth claims of all sorts in everyday life, including those about "weird" things. Science not only uncovers the secrets of the human genome and the composition of stars, but it is also the best tool that humanity has developed for determining whether anything that you learn, experience, think, or believe is likely to be true.

Among the ideas and beliefs we will analyze scientifically and skeptically will be astrology (and other forms of divining personality and future events), communication with the dead, "creation science"/"intelligent design", extrasensory perception and psychic ability, UFOs as alien spacecraft and abductors of humans, and "alternative" medical therapies.

At the completion of this course, my goals are that you will have a deeper understanding of: (1) the scientific method and how it can be used to test ordinary and extraordinary claims about human behavior; (2) how individuals' experiences and beliefs are influenced by the context in which they were derived; (3) how to critically evaluate your beliefs, as well as others' claims about human behavior, such as those that appear in scientific or popular media; (4) why psychologists find the study of human thought and behavior so fascinating.

This class may be especially valuable to those students interested in the fields of anthropology, education, health and medicine, journalism, law and criminal justice, philosophy, psychology, religion, science, and sociology. My ultimate goal is to help make you wiser consumers of information, propaganda, technology, and medical and scientific findings, thus making you more responsible and healthy citizens.

Grades

Your scores on 4 short quizzes, 3 in-semester exams, and a cumulative Final Exam will determine your grade.

QUIZZES: There will be 4 quizzes total, given in the first 15 minutes of class. Quizzes will cover material from the *readings* (NOT the lectures) since the previous quiz. A particular chapter may be quizzed as long as it has been, or is about to be, discussed in class. The 5

questions on each quiz will be short answer/fill in the blank. If you turn in a blank quiz with your name on it, you will earn a 50%. One question correct = 60%, 2 correct = 70%, 3 correct = 80%, 4 correct = 90%, 5 correct = 100%. If you miss a quiz, your grade for that quiz will be 0%. Thus, if you are not prepared for a quiz, it is better for your grade to attend the class and turn in a blank quiz than it is to skip class; a 50% in your average is much better than a 0%. *Your lowest quiz grade be replaced by your next lowest (3rd best) quiz grade*. Your average grade on these 4 quizzes will count as 20% of your final grade (as much as 1 exam).

***Quiz Schedule*: Thur 1/24; Thur 2/7; Thur 3/20; Thur 4/17**

EXAMS: Three multiple-choice exams will be given during the semester, and each will count 20% toward your final grade. *I will replace your worst of these 3 grades with your 2nd worst/2nd best*. The final exam is cumulative, covering all the material from the course, and it will count as 20% of your grade. I do not grade "on a curve" by forcing a particular number of As, Bs, etc. on each test, so you are not in competition with each other. However, if most of the grades are too low, I will boost everyone's grade by some fixed percentage. Each exam may be made up of a different number of questions and/or points, so your grade on each exam will be a percentage correct score:

As: 100 to 90%; Bs: 89 to 80%; Cs: 79 to 70%; Ds: 69 to 60%; Fs: 59% and below.

The exam schedule appears on the Semester Schedule below. Note that the ***Final Exam*** is scheduled for ***Tuesday, May 13, 3:30-5:30 pm.***. Students with more than two examinations within 24 hours may apply to the University Registrar's Office, 180 Mossman Building, for permission to change their exam schedules. The usual policy is to change the middle examination in a sequence of three.

***FINAL GRADES*: Plusses and minuses for final grade averages will be:**

99/100 = A+
89/90 = A-
87/88 = B+
79/80 = B-
77/78 = C+
69/70 = C-
67/68 = D+
59/60 = D-

No Make-Up Exams or Quizzes

If you miss a non-Final exam, your next lowest exam grade will replace it. If you miss 2 exams, the second one will earn a score of 0. If you miss one quiz, your 3rd best quiz grade will replace it. If you miss more than one quiz, those will each earn 0s. There is no make up for the Final exam.

Extra Credit

There are two forms of extra credit opportunity in this class: *Reaction Papers* and *Experiment Participation*. You may complete as many of the listed opportunities as you like.

Reaction Papers: You may earn extra credit via successful completion of up to **2** short "reaction papers" to assigned readings or videos. These will be due at various points in the semester and *will NOT be accepted after the BEGINNING of class on those dates* (see below for due dates). For each reaction paper, you will be required to read the assigned chapter/article (which I will soon post on Blackboard) and write a 3-page, double-spaced response to it *(I will only accept papers using 12 point Times font and 1 inch margins)*. You can take any position regarding these readings. You can agree with much of it or disagree with much of it. I require only that your response be thoughtful, rational, and evidence-based as possible; you must tell me what you do or don't find compelling and important, and why. You must *not* use any quotes in your papers; *all* of your words must be your own (see "Plagiarism" section below). *(Next year, note NO emailed papers)*

For satisfactory completion of each reaction paper, you will receive 3 points added to your final grade; for less satisfactory completion, you will receive only 2, 1, or 0 points. *Satisfactory completion of both papers will add 6 points (more than half a letter grade) to your final grade.*

1) Due **THUR, 2/28**: Levitt, S.D., & Dubner, S.J. (2005). "Where have all the criminals gone?" From Freakonomics (pp. 117-144), HarperCollins.

2) Due **TUES, 4/15**: Chapman, C.R., & Harris, A.W. (2002). "A skeptical look at September 11th: How we can defeat terrorism by reacting to it more rationally", ***AND*** attached Letters to the Editor in response to the article, and also Chapman/Harris's response to the letters. All from Skeptical Inquirer, vol's 26(5) and 27(1).

***Experiment Participation*:** You may participate in the research being conducted in the Psychology department as a way to learn about current scientific work. You may earn up to 5 points (*half a letter grade*) added to your final-exam score, where 1 point equals 30 minutes of research participation (most studies last between 30 and 120 minutes, although some may be longer or require multiple sessions). You must complete these points by FRIDAY, APRIL 11 to get credit for them. Please note that if you make a research appointment and fail to show up without providing 1 hour's notice, you will be deducted 1 point from your total. The first day to participate in experiments is Monday, January 21. All the rest of the details can be found in the "READ.ME" section of: https://experimetrix2.com/UNCG/

Attendance

Attending class is *strongly* advised, but not mandatory. I hope that class will be interesting and useful to you in understanding the course material, and I will often lecture on material that is not in the texts, and my lecture material will be important on exams. Thus, poor attendance will very likely lead to a poor grade, but it is your choice as an adult.

Arriving late or leaving early is distracting to your classmates – please don't do it. If you know that you will have to leave class early for an important reason one day, it is considered polite to tell me in advance and to sit near an exit to minimize disturbance.

If you carry a cell phone or pager, please turn it off when you come to class. If there is a compelling reason that you need to leave it turned, please discuss it with me.

I do not mind if you wish to audiotape my lectures. If this is helpful to you, please let me know, and you can put your tape recorder on a table in the front of the lecture hall.

Cheating

As a preventive measure, this class will follow the UNCG policy on cheating. A copy of this policy i.e., the *Academic Integrity Policy*, see:
http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/

I take cheating very seriously, so please don't do it in my class. During exams:

1) *All written material must be out of sight, whether it belongs to you or not*.
2) *Calculators, computers, pagers, cell phones, & personal stereos must be put away*
3) *Baseball caps must be worn backwards*.

Plagiarism

In this course, you may complete 2 extra-credit reaction papers (see above). Of course, you are to write these papers in your own words, and you must avoid plagiarizing your words and thoughts from other people (including your friends and book/article authors). Using research papers bought from the internet is clearly unacceptable, and they are easier to detect than you might think.

Many university professors find that students have difficulty understanding just what it is that "counts" as plagiarism, so I have put together this section. Please refer to it often, in this class and in other classes. Plagiarism is a form of cheating, and whether it is intentional or unintentional it will not be tolerated in any UNCG class. In this course, *plagiarism will result in a minimum penalty of no points for any extra credit assignments and a deduction of at least 6 points from your final grade*.

The material here was assembled largely from an email listserve discussion about plagiarism by psychology professors, including Erica Klein (U. of Houston), Paul Smith (Alverno Coll.), Miguel Roig (St. John's U.), Timothy Shearon (Albertson Coll. of Idaho), and James Clark (U. of Winnipeg). According to a 1986 publication, 16% of surveyed college students reported that in high school they were instructed to copy material word for word in writing reports. This is clearly plagiarism! You should never

copy someone else's words unless you put the words in quotation marks and clearly give credit to the author who wrote them and the publication in which they appeared.

However, in this course I make an unusual demand. In your written work here you may NEVER use quotes. You must always present every bit of information in your own words, and not in the words of another author. You may find this very difficult at first, but if you try you will find that it is possible. When you use quotes excessively it allows you to become intellectually lazy and not truly understand what you have read. So, how do you put information into your own words? You think about what you read and describe the key points in a way that reflects your own understanding of the material. Here is an example of a passage to be summarized, followed by an adequate summary and an inadequate summary (example taken in 1999 from http://www.uwm.edu/People/pcsmith/author1.htm):

"Long-term memory, that immensely complex storehouse, has also been most extensively studied with the use of verbal materials, usually presented in the form of long lists. As we shall see, this approach has resulted in some extremely important findings, but it has also been a bit misleading. After all, remembering lists of words is somewhat different from remembering a conversation, a recipe, or the plot of a movie." (Klatsky, 1975, p. 17)

<u>INADEQUATE</u> PARAPHRASE**:**
Long term memory is a complex storehouse that has been studied extensively using verbal materials presented in the form of long lists. While this approach has resulted in some important findings, it has been misleading. Remembering a list is not like remembering a discussion or a movie (Klatsky, 1975).

This summary does correctly indicate that these are Klatsky's ideas, so that's a start. <u>*You must always remember to credit other people's ideas to them, even if you use your own words to describe them.*</u> However, this summary used almost the exact same words as the original; it merely cut some words out and rearranged others, and so it does not represent the summarizer's own words. The author of this summary may not have understood what Klatsky wrote. If you turned in this paragraph as part of an assignment for my class you would have plagiarized. If you do not understand a part of an article or chapter, you should not attempt to summarize it. Work with yourself, your classmates, your friends, or with me, to understand the material first.

<u>ADEQUATE</u> PARAPHRASE:
We usually study long term memory by having subjects attempt to recall aloud items from long lists. Because such a task is different in important ways from the kinds of tasks that long term memory is usually called upon to perform in real life, our findings are somewhat questionable (Klatsky, 1975).

This summary reflects a true understanding of Klatsky's ideas. It reflects the meaning of Klatsky's words without using those words, themselves. Effective summaries do *not* attempt to paraphrase each and every sentence of the original text. *A good summary **condenses** the main points of the original text into a few (or even one!) simpler sentence(s)*.

To avoid using the words of the original article, write your summary without looking at the original article. Try to allow enough time to pass after reading that you cannot remember the exact words of the original article. In addition, when you read, try taking notes in "bullet," or outline form. That is, jot down a few key thoughts or ideas from each paragraph or section arranged in a shorthand format. Then, without the original article in front of you, reconstruct the *meaning* of the original work in as simple a way as possible (for example, in words you might use to explain it to an educated friend or parent).

Dropping/Withdrawal

The University policy on withdrawal will be followed (see page 38 of the Undergraduate Bulletin 2006-2007, or see:

www.uncg.edu/reg/Catalog/current/AcaRegs/CourseSelection.html#dropping.

The last date to drop this course without academic penalty is ***Wednesday, 3/19***.

Readings

There are two required texts for the course. Each class meeting listed in the *Semester Schedule* below has corresponding readings assigned, represented by abbreviations of the authors' names and the chapter numbers. For the lectures on Creation "science" (2/7 – 2/14), the assigned Pigliucci reading will be made available via Blackboard. Please note that the Lawson text has chapter numbers with decimal places (for example, Chapter 2.2 and Chapter 7.3) so be sure the read the correct, assigned chapters.

Required texts:

1) Stanovich (2007). *How to think straight about psychology* (8th ed.)
2) Lawson (2007). *Scientific perspectives on pseudoscience and the paranormal: Readings for general psychology*

Semester Schedule – Topics, Readings, & Exams

Day	Date	Material	Corresponding Readings
Tue	1/15	Syllabus, Introductions	
Thu	1/17	Science, Skepticism & Clear Thinking	Stan (1 & 2)
Tue	1/22	Science, Skepticism & Clear Thinking	Lawson (1)
Thu	1/24	Association, Correlation, and Causation	Stan (5)
Tue	1/29	Control, Experiment, and Causation	Stan (6)
Thu	1/31	Science or Pseudoscience?	Lawson (2.4 & 10.2)
Tue	2/5	Science or Pseudoscience?	"Prisoners of Silence" video
Thu	2/7	*Creation "Science" as Pseudoscience*	Pigliucci (2)
Tue	2/12	*Creation "Science" as Pseudoscience*	
Thu	2/14	*Creation "Science" as Pseudoscience*	
Tue	2/19	***EXAMINATION 1***	
Thu	2/21	Review Exam 1	
Tue	2/26	Self-Deception & Belief: Testimonials	Stan (4); Lawson (2.2)
Thu	2/28	Self-Deception & Belief: Media Paradox	
Tue	3/4	Self-Deception & Belief: Plausibility	
Thu	3/6	*Alternative Medicine & Healing*	Lawson (2.1, 4.2, 9.2)
Tue	3/11	***No class: Spring Break***	
Thu	3/13	***No class: Spring Break***	
Tue	3/18	*Alternative Medicine & Healing*	
Thu	3/20	*Why Psychologists Believe Weird Things*	Lawson (8.1)
Tue	3/25	*UFOs & Alien Abductions*	Lawson (6.2 & 6.3)
Thu	3/27	*UFOs & Alien Abductions (Clancy video)*	
Tue	4/1	***EXAMINATION 2***	
Thu	4/3	Review Exam 2	
Tue	4/8	Cognitive Illusions, Biases & Belief	Lawson (7.2 & 7.3)
Thu	4/10	Probability, Coincidence & Belief	Stan (10); Lawson (2.3)
Tue	4/15	Probability, Coincidence & Belief	Stan (11; *pp 165 – 175*)
Thu	4/17	*Astrology & Divination*	Lawson (8.3)
Tue	4/22	*Spirits, Channeling, & Psychics*	Lawson (3.2 & 5.3)
Thu	4/24	*Parapsychology & ESP*	
Tue	4/29	***EXAMINATION 3***	
Thu	5/1	Review Exam 3	

Tues 5/13 FINAL EXAMINATION (3:30-5:30 pm)