Psychology 607: Science of Imagination

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Office hours: Mon 2-3; Thurs 10-11; or by appointment

MEETINGS: Wednesday 10:00 to 11:50 in Franklin 271B

OVERVIEW: The capacity to mentally transcend our current time, place, and/or circumstance is a powerful tool that is available to us throughout life, part of our biological endowment as human beings. With our imaginations, we can relive (even improve) the past, plan and anticipate the future, process and come to terms with the issues in our present. In this graduate seminar we will be discussing new research investigating imagination from a variety of perspectives. Our readings include work in comparative literature and philosophy, as well as cognitive, developmental, and social psychology.

GRADES: Grades will be based on class attendance, your role as discussion leader for one class meeting, a 15-minute presentation of a proposed study investigating an issue related to the science of imagination, and a five-page paper describing the proposed study.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

Note: Readings to be adjusted based on student feedback.

April 2  Organizational meeting


April 9  Counterfactual thinking


**April 16** 
**Fantasy reality distinctions**


**April 23** 
**Imaginary relationships**


**April 30** 
**Pretend play**


**May 7** 
**Fiction**


**May 14 Creativity**


Note: Paul Silvia will be visiting the UO on May 16, with talks at 12-1 and 4-5:30.

**May 21 Virtual reality**


**May 28 & June 4 Discussion of research proposals**

Readings to be assigned by students

Papers are due on June 9.