Overview: Imagination refers to the capacity to mentally transcend time, place, and/or circumstance to think about what might have been, plan and anticipate the future, create fictional worlds, and consider remote and close alternatives to actual experiences. This multi-faceted capacity emerges in early childhood and is fundamental to human thought throughout life. The study of imagination crosscuts traditional areas in psychology and extends into other fields as well (e.g., philosophy, literature). In this course we will examine how psychologists think about and study human imagination, covering topics such as pretend play in children, counterfactual reasoning, mental time travel, creativity, dreaming, and virtual worlds.

Class attendance and participation
The most enjoyable courses are those in which everyone comes to class well prepared and makes thoughtful contributions to the discussion. To enhance the quality of discussion, everyone should read and think about the assigned material before the relevant class meeting. To encourage you to do so, a short paper (1-2 pages double-spaced typed hard copy) will be due every Wednesday (except in Week 1). In this paper, you will provide your reaction to the week’s readings (critique, questions, etc.). Each reaction paper is worth 10 points. To receive the full number of points, the paper should provide evidence that you have read and thought about the assigned articles for that week. Late papers will not be accepted. If you have to miss a class meeting, please email the reaction paper to me by the due date.

You will also receive a score out of 50 for class attendance and participation. To receive the full score you need to arrive on time, be an active part of the class (e.g., not texting, etc.), and stay until the end of class. Students sometimes miss class due to sickness or other reasons. The quality of your reaction papers and contributions to class discussions will be taken into account when assigning your grade for class participation. Thus one missed class will not hurt your grade if you consistently take an active part in other class meetings. On the other hand if you never speak up in class and your reaction papers consistently reflect a superficial reading of the material, your grade for this part of the course will be reduced. (90 points for reaction papers and 50 points for attendance/participation; total of 140 points)

Review Paper
Students will write a review paper in which they summarize the research findings addressing an important question about the psychology of imagination (about 10 - 12 pages). You will be given a list of
possible topics, but you can also propose your own topic related to the study of imagination (these must be approved).

This course is designed to help develop your writing skills. For this reason, there are three deadlines associated with your review paper. Failure to meet deadlines 1 and 2 will result in forfeiting the points indicated below and you will not have the opportunity to receive feedback on your outline/draft.

1. February 16: Submit a first draft (hard copy) of your review paper to be read by another student. I will remove the cover pages with names and assign the papers (with no identifying information) to other students in the class for written feedback. On February 18, everyone who turned in a paper on February 16 will be given a paper by another student to review. In the past, some students have turned in “papers” at this stage that were little more than outlines -- not finished enough to allow another student to edit and give feedback. You will not receive the full number of points if your paper is not a reasonable draft (at least 10 pages). In some cases, your paper might be returned to you and you will not be given another student’s paper to review. Note that the more complete your paper is, the more help the student will be able to give you.

2. February 25: Submit your typed feedback plus the edited paper (10 points). On March 2, I will give you back your own review paper, along with the peer review.

3. March 18: Turn in the final draft of your paper (100 points). Late papers will be marked down substantially; the exact number of points that you will lose will depend on how late the paper is and why it is late.

Total for paper: 110 points

**Book Review** (25 points)
Weeks 1 & 2: All students will schedule a brief meeting (about 15 minutes) with me to discuss their plans for their review papers and their interests in imagination. I will choose a relevant book for each student to read over the next 3 weeks. Week 5: Each student will schedule an appointment with me to discuss the book’s contents. The topic of your book might be the topic you pick for your review paper; however, it is ok to write your review paper on an entirely different topic.

**Creativity Project** (25 points)
Over the course of the first 6 weeks, you will be creating a character and monitoring your creative process in a series of writing assignments. Most of these assignments will be completed in class. The final assignment will be completed outside of class time.

**Grades**
It is sometimes difficult for students to figure out what to expect for a grade in a course that has no exams, lots of assignments, points for participation, etc. For example, students who come to class every lecture tend to expect to receive an A. While it is true that it is difficult for students to get an A without regular attendance, students who do not do a good job on their written work will not receive an A in this course.

All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. No form of cheating or plagiarism will be tolerated. Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else’s product, words, ideas, or data as one’s own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of compete, accurate and specific references. On written assignments, if verbatim statements are included, the statements must be enclosed by quotation marks. Unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. In addition, it is plagiarism to submit work in which portions were substantially produced by someone acting as a tutor or editor. If in doubt, consult me or
seek assistance from the staff of Academic Learning Services (68 PLC, 346-3226). If cheating is discovered on the assignments, then the University will be notified and appropriate action will be taken.

Accommodations

If one of the following applies to you, please see the instructor as soon as possible to make adjustments. You are strongly encouraged to contact Disability Services (346-1155) if you have a non-documentated condition that creates difficulty for you as a student.
- Documented learning or medical disability
- Non-documentated need for adjustments to help you learn
- On a sports team that travels this quarter
- English is not your first language

With advanced planning, adjustments are relatively straightforward. Adjustments at the last minute can be problematic and sometimes are not possible.

OUTLINE OF LECTURE TOPICS

This outline and required readings are subject to change depending upon class interests and discussion. Readings will be available on the course Blackboard site.

**Jan 5**  
Introduction to the psychology of imagination

**Jan 7**  
Development of imagination  

Creativity project: Create a character

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Jan 12**  
Virtual worlds  

Creativity project: An ordinary day in the life of your character

**Jan 14**  
Social robots (Guest lecture by Naomi Aguiar)  

Reaction Paper #1 is due.

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
Jan 5-16  Meet with professor to discuss paper topic and receive a book.

Jan 19  Martin Luther King Day – no class meeting or office hours

Jan 21  Fantasy and reality

How to write a review paper

Creativity project: Your character overcomes a challenge
Reaction paper #2 is due. This paper should be focused on the chapter by Paul Harris.

Jan 26  Imaginary relationships

Jan 28  Anthropomorphism


Creativity project: Your character makes a friend
Reaction Paper #3 is due

Feb 2  Magical thinking


Feb 4  Fiction

Creativity project: Your character has a stunning success
Reaction Paper #4 is due.

Feb 9 Dreaming

Feb 11 Mind wandering and mental time travel

Creativity project: Final assignment to be completed outside of class and emailed to professor by Feb 13.
Reaction Paper #5 is due.

Jan 26 – Feb 13 Meet with professor to discuss book

Feb 16 Music and imagination (Guest lecture by Jenny Mendoza)

First draft of review paper is due.

Feb 18 Creativity

You will receive a review paper by another student to review.
Reaction Paper # 6 is due.

Feb 23 Creativity and the performing arts: How to save the world and lose all respect for yourself (Guest lecture by Dr. Brian McWhorter, UO School of Music) Readings to be announced.

Feb 25 Creativity continued

Reaction Paper #7 is due.
Peer review is due.
March 2  Creativity and mental health

You will receive the peer review of the first draft of your review paper.

March 4  Autism and imagination

Reaction paper #8 is due.

March 9  Neurological disorders of the imagination

March 11  Imagination and emotion

Reaction paper #9 is due.

March 18  Final draft of review paper is due. (Note: There is no final exam for this course.)
(12:15 pm)