Psychology 607 S15: Creativity

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Meetings: Wednesdays 10-11:50 in Straub 383

Overview: The scientific study of creativity has a somewhat checkered past filled with disputes about how creativity should be defined and measured and controversies over the role of expertise, intelligence, development, and personality variables in its expression. While most people would agree that creativity is important in everyday life and at the societal level, research on creativity has not always been a highly valued and central part of mainstream psychology. However, the last decade has seen a surge in new interdisciplinary work in this area and the publication of comprehensive texts that bring together a field that has been fragmented and filled with misconceptions. The topics in this seminar will include the history of creativity research, new individualist and sociocultural approaches, the creative process, the development of creativity, and how creativity differs across domains (visual arts, writing, music, theater, and science).

Readings:
We will be reading chapters from Explaining creativity: The science of human innovation (Sawyer, 2012) which is available at the UO Bookstore. The additional readings will be will be provided.

Grades: The most enjoyable seminars 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. Each week (except Week 1) you will be prepare a short reaction paper (1-2 page double-spaced typed) in which you discuss the week’s readings and provide two or three discussion questions. Grades will be based on class attendance, participation in discussion, and the reaction papers.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

April 1 Background and history of research on creativity
Sawyer, R. K. (2012). Explaining creativity. Chapter 1 (“Introduction”) pp. 3-14 and
Chapter 2 (“Conceptions of creativity”) pp. 14-36

April 8 Assessment of creativity
Silvia, P. J., Winterstein, B. P., Willse, J. T., Barona, C. M., Cram, J. T., Hess, K. I.,

**April 15**  
**Development of Creativity**  

**April 22**  
**Creative Process: Incubation**  

**April 29**  
**Creative process: Discernment**  

**May 6**  
**Group and Organizational approaches to creativity**  

**May 13**  
**Domains of creativity**  

**May 20**  
**The neuroscience of creativity**  

**May 27**  
**Strategies for increasing creativity**  
| June 3 | No class |