



PSYCHOL 2115A (570)
Introduction to Sensation and Perception
Fall/Winter 2026 - 2027

Instructor: Dr. Laura Rosen
Email: laura.rosen@uwo.ca

Course Information

Mode of Instruction: in-person

Calendar Description: An introduction to the study of the human senses and higher order perceptual processes. Data gathered from psychophysical research and studies of the nervous system in both humans and other animals will be discussed. The course will review the mechanisms and principles of operation of vision, hearing, touch, taste and smell.

Antirequisite(s): [Psychology 2015A/B](#).

Prerequisite(s): A mark of at least 60% in 1.0 credits of Psychology at the 1000 level.

Extra Information: 4 lecture hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: PSYCHOL

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

King's University College
Psych 2115A – Introduction to Sensation and Perception
Fall 2026

Course information:

Introduction to Sensation and Perception, Psych 2115A (570)

Instructor(s): Dr. Laura Rosen

Contact Information: laura.rosen@uwo.ca

Office hours: See Brightspace

Course description:

An introduction to the study of the human senses and higher order perceptual processes. Data gathered from psychophysical research and studies of the nervous system in both humans and other animals will be discussed. The course will review the mechanisms and principles of operation of vision, hearing, touch, taste and smell.

Course learning outcomes:

This course introduces how we take in and make sense of sensory input. Course material will discuss the mechanisms of sensation, the function and limitations of perceptions, and theoretical discussions to understand perceptual phenomena.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Distinguish between sensation and perception
- Describe and explain the structure and function of sensory systems
- Describe how we translate environmental stimuli and their properties into neural activity across multiple senses
- Understand how sensory illusions give us insight into perceptual processes
- Understand the major theories, hypotheses, research methods in psychophysics and sensation and perception
- Understand how principles of sensation and perception apply to everyday experiences

Mode of Instruction: In-person

Course textbooks/materials:

Wolfe, JM et al. 2025. Sensation & Perception, 7th Edition. Oxford University Press. (Required)

Note: Physical copies of the textbook can be ordered from the Western Book Store website. If you prefer an e-book version of the textbook, this cannot be ordered through the Book Store website. Instead, you can purchase an e-book version [here](#). Purchasing the textbook new grants access to lots of additional material that can be useful to your learning, including flash cards, chapter reviews, and practice questions. Note that 180 days does not cover the entirety of the

semester, so students are strongly encouraged to purchase at least the 1-year access if choosing the digital version. A computer with internet access is required for accessing the course Brightspace page and for participating in iClicker polls. (Publisher Print Price: \$230.99)

Methods of evaluation:

Grades in the course will be based on the items listed below. Grades will **not** be adjusted on the basis of need. **There is no option to re-write tests or exams, or to re-submit assignments to earn a higher grade.** There are no extra credit assignments available to raise final grades. Students are responsible for knowing the dates, times, and locations of assignment deadlines and exams. Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day late.

iClicker Participation – 5%

- Answering polls and exam-style multiple choice questions using iClicker
- Full grade will be awarded for answering all questions (they don't need to be correct!)
- 0.5% per class (best 10 of 11 classes)
- Because only the top 10 participation marks will be used for final grading, there are **no makeups for participation grades**

In-class Quizzes – 15%

- Starting the second week of class (Sept 17), a 10-question quiz will test on the previous week's material
- Quizzes will be held at the **start** of class, so it is up to the student to ensure they arrive to class on time. Extra time will not be granted to late students.
- Each quiz is worth 1.875% of your final grade
- Only the best 8 out of 10 quiz marks will be applied to your final grade, but students are highly encouraged to write all quizzes to facilitate their learning
- Because only the top 8 quizzes will be used, there are **no makeup quizzes**
- There will be no quiz during the week of the midterm

Creative Assignment – 15%

- Students will individually complete a creative assignment to demonstrate understanding of course material. The topic will be provided to students in the third week of class. Responses will be due on Brightspace **Nov 13th at 11:59pm.**

Midterm Exam – 30%

The midterm exam will be held during class time in the regular classroom on Oct.22. The midterm exam will cover all course content from **Sep 10th - Oct 8th** (chapters 1-5). The format will be multiple choice and may include labeling diagrams. You will be given 2 hours. Please note, Friday Make-Up Exams may only be written with the instructor's consent. The makeup date for this assessment will be Friday, October 30th.

Final Exam – 35%

The final exam will be held during the December exam period and will be scheduled by the Registrar. It will cover lecture material and readings from after the midterm only (i.e., from **Oct 29th to Dec 3rd**). The format will be multiple choice and may include labeling diagrams. You will be given 3 hours.

Exams will not be returned to students but may be reviewed by appointment. Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams will be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Academic Considerations:

All students are expected to attend class and complete course work on time. Meeting deadlines will help to ensure you stay on track in the course and is a skill that is important within and beyond your formal schooling.

There, of course, may be unexpected situations that prohibit students from attending class or submitting work on time. Students can use their one request for academic consideration without supporting documentation for the Creative Assignment **only**. **Academic consideration requests with documentation are required for the midterm exam.**

The iClicker participation grade has flexibility built-in, and this is not a merit-based grade. Showing up to class and participating in polls will ensure you receive full marks. Because the lowest participation marks are being dropped from final grading, **there are no makeups for participation.**

All quizzes will take place in class. This is a low-stakes quiz to help reinforce your learning. Because the lowest 2 quiz marks are being dropped from final grading, **there are no makeups for quizzes.**

Extenuating circumstances (i.e., extended illness or leave) should always be brought to the attention of your instructor to ensure that timely accommodations can be made. **When in doubt, reach out to your instructor as soon as possible.**

Academic Integrity:

- Scholastic discipline follows Western policies. Please review them [here](#)
- **Note:** All written assignments will be subject to screening through Turnitin
- Generative AI and translation tools are **not permitted** in this course, in line with the Department of Psychology policy on AI tools (see below).
- Computer-marked multiple-choice exams will be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Schedule of Classes, Readings, Assessments:

Date	Topic	Reading	Assessment
Sep 10, 2026	Introduction to Sensation & Perception	Chapter 1	
Sep 17, 2026	Introduction to Vision	Chapter 2	Chapter 1 quiz
Sep 24, 2026	Spatial Vision	Chapter 3	Chapter 2 quiz
Oct 1, 2026	Object Perception & Recognition	Chapter 4	Chapter 3 quiz
Oct 8, 2026	The Perception of Colour	Chapter 5	Chapter 4 quiz
Oct 15, 2026	Fall Reading Week		
Oct 22, 2026	Midterm exam		
Oct 29, 2026	Space Perception & Binocular Vision	Chapter 6	Chapter 5 quiz
Nov 5, 2026	Attention & Scene Perception	Chapter 7	Chapter 6 quiz
Nov 12, 2026	Visual Motion Perception	Chapter 8	Chapter 7 quiz, assignment due on Nov 13 th
Nov 19, 2026	Hearing: Physiology & Psychoacoustics	Chapter 9	Chapter 8 quiz
Nov 26, 2026	Vestibular Sensation & Touch	Ch 12, 13	Chapter 9 quiz
Dec 3, 2026	Olfaction & Taste	Ch 14, 15	Chapter 12, 13 quiz
TBD	Final Exam		

Note: Changes to the above schedule will be announced on OWL Brightspace. Students are responsible for being aware of announcements made online.

Last date to drop a first-term half course without academic penalty: **Nov 30th, 2026**

Department of Psychology Policies Related to AI Tools

1. Policy on the Use of Generative AI Tools

The Department of Psychology expects that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial).

The use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) is not permitted for any submitted coursework unless express permission has been granted by your instructor.

Students **should not have AI tools write any part of their assignments or papers, either by copying and pasting or by paraphrasing the output.** Unauthorized use of AI constitutes an academic offence and will be subject to academic discipline.

Additional information: Students can use AI tools to clarify questions they have about course content (e.g., you can ask ChatGPT about a course concept to help with your understanding), but students should be aware that the response may be inaccurate or inconsistent with the course content. Asking your instructor is a more effective strategy. Students should note that information provided by AI tools such as ChatGPT can include mistakes, inaccuracies, biases, and outdated information. Whenever these tools are used, students should cross-verify the information provided to them. This means verifying that the sources used by AI exist and have been accurately summarized, consulting multiple original and reputable up-to-date sources to verify information, and being cautious of bias that could be present in the information provided.

2. Policy on Use of Translation Tools*

The Department of Psychology views the unapproved use of translation or language applications as an academic offence.

Any usage of translation applications or language generation by students to complete specific assigned work for this course **must be approved** by the instructor **prior** to submitting the work **and noted by the student in the submitted work** itself.

Writing text and then feeding it into a computer application to improve or translate your own words, changing a few words, and then submitting this text as if it was your own **constitutes plagiarism.** You must compose text, choose words, construct logic flow, structure sentences and paragraphs to organize, synthesize, interpret information with your own mind. When you borrow language or ideas from another person or from a machine this must be acknowledged with quotation marks and/or citations.

Why do we have this policy?

- Translation is intellectual work and produces intellectual property, thus any text which is translated must cite the translator.
- Psychology endeavors to advance students' linguistic, analytic, and reasoning competencies – this can not happen outside of specific language competencies.
- Earning a university degree signals that an individual has advanced literacy and communicative skill in the language of instruction at the university; this is English at King's University College at Western University. If translation machines are used by students without regulation, we will have no way of certifying whether these competencies exist and fewer mechanism for encouraging students to do the hard work to develop them.

** Based on the policy developed by the Department of Child and Youth Studies*

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found at [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible, and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>.

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this which assessment has been designated as requiring documentation for consideration (that is, exempt from undocumented absences).
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

If an instructor has built flexibility into their assessments (e.g., “complete 8 of 10 quizzes”), this flexibility will already address consideration needs and thus academic consideration may be denied.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the “Special Examination” (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a multiple exam situation (i.e., you are scheduled to write more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:
<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College:
<https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

Good2talk is an online and phone resource for students, available 24/7, with services in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a Social Worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

6. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. **Check with you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

7. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

8. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

9. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.