

COGS 155: *Gesture and Cognition*

Summer Session I 2014

M/W 8-11 AM, CENTR 201

**Contact Information:**

*Instructor:* Esther Walker (e1walker at ucsd dot edu)

*Office Hours:* Tuesdays 10-11AM (CSB 233) and by appointment

If you cannot make it to my office hour and would like to meet with me, please let me know! Email is the best way to schedule an appointment. *To make sure that I receive your email, please always include **COGS 155** in the subject line.*

*Teaching assistant:* Luke Miller (lumiller at ucsd dot edu)

*Office Hours:* Thursdays 2-3pm (CSB 233)

**Course Description:**

Imagine yourself in the middle of a small, isolated, island community where you do not speak nor understand a single word of the language spoken there. While the words that come streaming out of the speakers' mouths may be incomprehensible, you may zoom in on their gestures: they may point at particular objects, hold up a particular number of fingers, or sketch out imaginary objects with their hands. While the exact nature of the gestures may vary, one thing is clear: when people speak, they gesture. Why do we gesture? Can gestures tell us anything about how we think? In this course, we will explore these topics and others, including the role of gesture in language and communication, cross-cultural differences (and similarities) in gesture, and the representation of gesture in the brain.

Students will first become familiar with the methods used to study and analyze gesture and understand how it relates to the speech it is co-produced with. From there, students will dive into a cross-section of scientific literature on gesture research and learn to analyze, critique, and thoughtfully discuss such research. Finally, students will propose and develop a research proposal that examines a question involving gesture and cognition.

**Course Requirements:**

This course is largely discussion-based and so it is very important that you come to each class prepared. To ensure that you've come to class prepared, you will need to complete written summaries of the readings for each class (24% of your grade) and lead discussion once during the course of the class (this will count as part of your participation grade). You will also carry out a couple of small projects that will contribute to your final research proposal.

ASSIGNMENT	PERCENTAGE
<b>Homework 1: Gesture coding</b>	5%
<b>Homework 2: Proposal background</b>	5%
<b>Homework 3: Proposal methods + revised background</b>	5%
<b>Reading summaries (8 total)</b>	24%
<b>Midterm Exam</b>	25%

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<b>Final Research Proposal</b>	26%
<b>Participation</b>	10%
<b>Extra credit: SONA participation (or article summaries)</b>	3%

**Course Policies:**

- **Participation:** Participation is worth 10% of your grade. This grade will be made up of a combination of attendance, participation in class discussion, and your leading of a discussion.
- **Laptops in the classroom:** While laptops may be used during the lecture part of the course to take notes, they may *not* be used during the discussion section of the course. You will not need them.
- **Late assignments:** All assignments (including reading summaries) must be turned in *before* the beginning of class. Any assignment turned in after the start of class will be considered one day late. All assignments are docked 10% for each day they are late.
- **Academic Integrity:** You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with UCSD's Academic Integrity policy. Plagiarism is considered a serious offense and I take it very seriously. *Seriously, don't do it.* Educate yourself about common myths here:  
<https://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/plagiarism.html>
- **Citations using APA Style:** For your writing assignments, all references that you use **MUST** be cited. Failing to cite an article is considered plagiarism! For this course, we will use **APA style** when citing references. See the link below for more information:  
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>  
If you are unsure about how to write your references in APA style, please talk to Luke or me.
- **Extra credit:** You may receive up to 3% of extra credit by participating in SONA Experiments. You will receive one point of extra credit per hour of participation. Students who do not wish to participate in these experiments may choose to write brief summaries (~2 pages) of articles that I have selected. Please let me know if you choose to complete this option and I will send you the articles. All extra credit (including articles) must be completed by **July 30<sup>th</sup>**.
- **Special Accommodations:** If you are in need of special accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible.

**Course schedule and readings:**

Links to all readings will be posted on the course website.

Date	Topic	Reading(s)
<b>WEEK 1</b>		
<b>June 30th</b>	Introduction to gesture	<p>Goldin-Meadow, S. (2003). <i>Hearing Gesture: How our Hands Help us Think</i>. Chapter 1 (pages 3-11).</p> <p>Kendon, A. (2004). <i>Gesture: Visible Action as Utterance</i>. Chapter 2 (pages 7-16).</p>
<b>July 2nd</b>	Gesture and language / Introduction to gesture analysis	<p>Kendon, A. (2004). <i>Gesture: Visible Action as Utterance</i>. Chapter 7 (bottom of page 111 to top of 124);</p> <p>McNeill, D. (1992). <i>Hand and Mind</i>. Chapter 3, (read only pages 75-94).</p>
<p>Workshop: gesture coding and analysis  <i>Assign discussion leaders</i>  <b>PROJECT 1 ASSIGNED</b></p>		
<b>WEEK 2</b>		
<b>July 7th</b>	Abstraction in Gesture	<p>Casasanto, D. &amp; Jasmin, K. (2010). Good and bad in the hands of politicians: Spontaneous gestures during positive and negative speech. <i>PLoS One</i>, 5.</p> <p>Núñez et al. (2012) Contours of time: Topographic construals of past, present, and future in the Yupno valley of PNG, <i>Cognition</i></p>
<p><b>PROJECT 1 DUE</b></p> <p><b>PROPOSAL RESEARCH BACKGROUND ASSIGNED</b></p>		
<b>July 9th</b>	Cognitive dimensions of gesture (how does gesture affect thought)	<p>Beilock, S. L., &amp; Goldin-Meadow, S. (2010). Gesture changes thought by grounding it in action. <i>Psychological Science</i>, 21, 1605-1610.</p> <p>Gillespie, James, Federmeier, &amp; Watson (2014). Verbal working memory predicts co-speech gesture: Evidence from Individual differences. <i>Cognition</i></p>
<b>WEEK</b>		
<b>July 14th</b>	Models of gesture production	<p>Krauss, R. M. (1998). Why do we gesture when we speak? <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i>, 7, 54-60.</p>

Iverson, J. M., & Goldin-Meadow, S. (2001). The resilience of gesture in talk: Gesture in blind speakers and listeners. *Developmental Science*, 4, 416-422.

**PROPOSAL BACKGROUND  
 RESEARCH DUE**

**PROPOSAL METHODS  
 ASSIGNED**

**July 16th** Models of gesture production; gesture and communication

Bavelas, J., Gerwing, J., Sutton, C., & Prevost, D. (2008). Gesturing on the telephone: Independent effects of dialogue and visibility. *Journal of Memory & Language*, 58, 495-520.

Cook, S. W., & Tanenhaus, M. K. (2009). Embodied communication: speakers' gestures affect listeners' actions, *Cognition*, 113, 98-104.

**PROPOSAL MEETINGS: July  
 17th, July 18th, July 19th**

**WEEK 4**

**July 21st** Development of gesture; gesture and the brain

Iverson & Goldin-Meadow (2005). Gesture paves the way for language development. *Psychological Science*, 16, 367-371.

Mayberry, R. & Nicoladis (2000) Gesture Reflects Language Development: Evidence From Bilingual Children. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9, 192-196.

**PROPOSAL METHODS DUE**

Bates, E., & Dick, F. (2002). Language, gesture, and the developing brain. *Developmental psychobiology*, 40, 293-310.

**FINAL PROPOSAL  
 ASSIGNED**

**July 23rd** **MIDTERM**; Gesture and the brain

Wu, Y. C. & Coulson, S. (2005). Meaningful gestures: Electrophysiological indices of iconic gesture comprehension. *Psychophysiology*, 42, 654-667.

Willems, R.M., & Hagoort, P. (2007). Neural evidence for the interplay between language, gesture, and action: A review. *Brain and Language*. (1-12)

**WEEK 5**

**July 28th** Cross-cultural variation in gesture

Kita, S. (2009). Cross-cultural variation of speech-accompanying gesture: A review. *Language and Cognitive Processes*, 24, 145-167.

**July 30th** Gestural origins of language

Corballis, M. C. (2008). The Gestural Origins of Language. In N.

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Masataka, *The Origins of Language: Unraveling Evolutionary Forces* (pp. 11-23). Tokyo, Japan: Springer.

Pollick, A.S., & de Waal, F.B.M. (2007). Ape gestures and language evolution. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *104*, 8184-8189.

**FINAL RESEARCH  
PROPOSALS DUE FRIDAY,  
AUGUST 1<sup>st</sup> by NOON.**

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This course is largely based on previous versions taught by Kensy Cooperrider and Rafael Núñez. A huge thanks to them for their guidance and input!