

# Symbolic Systems 210

## *Learning Facial Emotions: Art and Psychology*

**Spring Quarter, 2007-2008**  
**Stanford University, 3 units**

Instructors:

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Art Model:

Megan Ballog, [meghanballog@gmail.com](mailto:meghanballog@gmail.com)

Class meets: Tues/Thurs, 11:00-12:15, Wallenberg Hall, Room 317

Course prerequisites: Psych1 or consent

Class size: limited to 15 students because of the studio component.

### **Course Description**

The focus of this seminar course is a quantification of the differences between an art and psychology approach to cognitive tasks related to facial emotions. Particular attention is given to the tasks of learning to recognize, feel, and respond to facial emotions between two people. Dimensions of analysis include cognitive modeling and neuroscience. Learning through drawing is probably most advantageous for cognitive deficits related to autism, aging, and culture.

A psychology approach to learning facial emotions is training by being told the facial features that define different emotions, being shown examples of particular emotions, and being given feedback on performance. Paul Ekman's Micro Expression Training Tool (METT) and Subtle Expression Training Tool (SETT) learning methods, described at [www.paulekman.com](http://www.paulekman.com), are excellent paradigmatic examples of this approach, and will be used in this course.

An artistic approach to learning facial emotions involves the immersive experience of one-on-one drawing of live subjects. The Draw the Feeling approach, developed by Pamela Davis Kivelson and described at [www.drawthefeeling.org](http://www.drawthefeeling.org), is an excellent paradigmatic example of an artistic drawing approach, and will be used in this course. Students will draw live subjects using this method. Prior art experience is not required.

The general topic of this course has not been previously studied, thus offering the opportunity for students to engage in original research. The course will provide first-hand experience with the art drawing and psychology approaches. This provides the students with the opportunity to formulate how different quantitative research methodologies can be used to measure the relative effectiveness of an art drawing versus psychology approach.