*UNDERGRADUATE THESIS*

*IN PSYCHOLOGY (PSYD98) OR NEUROSCIENCE (NROD98)*

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## OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this course is to provide students pursuing a specialist degree in Psychology or Neuroscience with an intensive research apprenticeship in their discipline. In the process of collaborating with a faculty advisor, students will develop the skills necessary to conduct and present research. These skills include library research, designing experiments, collecting and analyzing data, interpreting results, writing, and public speaking.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS (CLASS COMPONENT)

The following requirements will contribute 5 percent of your final grade in the thesis course.  Specific credit will not be given to individual requirements.

1.  Attendance and participation in all scheduled meetings
2.  3 short oral presentations
3.  Poster presentation

### 1. Attendance
The class will not meet every week during the year.  For scheduled classes, however, attendance is mandatory.  Attendance will be taken at each meeting, and information about your contributions to the class will be made available to your supervisors.  The opportunity the class time affords students to develop public speaking skills and to engage in discussion about research with peers is an important part of the overall research experience.  Students absent from more than 3 meetings will obtain a grade of no more than 50% (or 2.5/5) for the class component of the course.

### 2. Oral Presentations

Presentations of Thesis Proposal (fall term)
During the first term, students will make oral presentations describing their proposed thesis projects. Presentations should include a brief background of relevant literature, clear statements of hypotheses and predictions, and proposed methods and data analysis

techniques.  For many students, these presentations will provide an opportunity for feedback, while projects are still in a relatively early stage of development. Presentations should be 10-15 min.

Presentations of Preliminary Data (winter term)
You will be required to present preliminary data early in January, even single subject data. This "data blitz" will help you to decide whether or not you are on the right track with respect to the design and time-line of your study. Presentations should be <u>less than</u> 10 min and limited to five slides: theory, hypotheses, methods, results, conclusions.

Thesis presentation (winter term).
Toward the end of the second term, students will present their theses.  The idea is to present them as if you were giving a talk at a scientific conference.  You should tell us what you did, why you did it, what you found, and what it means.  Presentations should be no more than 15 min.

*3.  Poster Presentations*
Students will present posters of their projects during a thesis day at the end of the year. More details about the day and what should be included in the content of the posters will be provided in the second term.


**ETHICS REVIEW**

All research in the University that involves living animals, human or nonhuman, including thesis research, must be approved by the appropriate ethics review board before the research can begin.  In most cases, the department can provide a speeded review process for thesis students.  All students should consult with their supervisor first thing in the term to determine what review procedures have been followed for their projects and whether additional review proceedings are required before the work can be carried out. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of your supervisor to ensure that your projects have met the necessary ethics review requirements; however, it is an important part of your education to know and understand what those requirements are.  For this reason, you are asked to have a conversation with your supervisor before September 25 and be prepared in class on September 25 to discuss the ethics approval that has been obtained for your project, or what approval is still necessary and the necessary time-frame for completing it.


**BLACKBOARD**

This course will be organized and managed using the *Blackboard* system.  A link to the website is provided on the intranet course page.  Students are required to obtain a UTORID in order to access the page.

Blackboard will be used to make class announcements and post presentation schedules.

**FINAL THESIS SUBMISSION**

Students are required to submit their final thesis by **Monday April 5 at 5 pm**. Late submissions will be subject to a penalty of 5% per day. Theses are to be submitted digitally on Blackboard. Instructions on how to do this will be provided in the second term.

**SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS**

| Date: | The topic is: |
|---|---|
| Sept. 11 | -Welcome and Overview |
| Sept. 18 | -No scheduled meeting (Please meet with supervisors before Oct 2 to establish a time-line for your project and to discuss ethics approval for your project.  Be prepared to discuss in class Oct 2). |
| Oct. 2 | -Ethics in research<br>-Tips for giving effective oral presentations<br>-Scheduling of presentations |
| Oct. 16 | -Presentations – Thesis Proposal |
| Oct. 23 | -Presentations – Thesis Proposal |
| Oct. 30 | -Presentations – Thesis Proposal |
| Nov. 6 | -Presentations – Thesis Proposal |
|  | **2010** |
| Jan. 16 | -Presentations – Preliminary data |
| Jan. 23 | -Presentations – Preliminary data |
| Jan. 30 | -Presentations – Preliminary data |
| March 6 | -Presentations – Results |
| March 13 | -Presentations – Results |
| March 20 | -Presentations – Results |
| March 27 | -Presentations – Results |
| TBA | UTSC – Poster Day |