

PSYD98: Thesis

University of Toronto, Scarborough (Fall 2019-Winter 2020)

Fridays, 1:10-3:00pm, AC332



Instructor: Kyle Danielson, PhD
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Office: PO 103, Room 108
Office Hours: By appointment

Dr. Kyle Danielson is an Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream in the Department of Psychology, where he teaches undergraduate courses in developmental psychology across the lifespan, as well as PSYA02 (Introduction to Clinical, Developmental, Social, and Personality Psychology). His primary research interests are in language acquisition, bilingualism, and the teaching of psychology.

Contacting the instructor: I am very happy to hear from you by email whenever you have a question or concern, or to set up an in-person appointment. **When writing to me, please put “PSYD98” in the subject line of the email to help me get to it faster, and include your student number in your signature.** I will respond to all emails within two business days (not counting weekends and statutory holidays). Please read through this syllabus document before sending queries that are addressed here.

Course Description: This course is designed to provide students in the Specialist programs in Psychology or Mental Health Studies with an intensive research apprenticeship in their field. In the process of collaborating with a faculty advisor, students will develop the skills necessary to conduct and present original research. These skills include library research, designing experiments, collecting and analyzing data, interpreting results, writing, and public speaking.

Learning Outcomes: By the conclusion of this course, you should...

- ...have experience carrying out an original research project from start to finish, including:
 - Proficiency in formulating a research question and hypotheses
 - Proficiency in conducting a literature review
 - Proficiency in operationalizing a research question using appropriate methodological techniques
 - Experience in collecting data using such methods
 - Experience in analyzing and reporting data using appropriate statistical methods

- Proficiency in drawing conclusions from such data
- ...be well versed in ethical issues in psychological science, including experience in submitting and amending ethics protocols for research with human and non-human animal subjects
- ...be proficient in presenting research in the following formats: an oral research proposal, a conference poster, and a formal paper
- ...be proficient in writing an abstract according to the standards of the field
- ...know how to craft and update a curriculum vitae (CV) according to the standards of the field
- ...be proficient in communicating and collaborating with colleagues at various levels of experience (e.g., other undergraduate student peers, graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and research supervisors)

Prerequisites and/or Course Restrictions: Enrolment in this course is restricted to students in the Specialist programs of Psychology or Mental Health Studies **who have secured the support of a supervisor in one of those programs**. Students in the major programs in Psychology or Mental Health Studies may be permitted, if space permits, and if they have secured the support of a supervisor. In order to enrol in the course, students must hold a cumulative GPA of at least 3.3, and have completed: PSYC02, PSYB01 or PSYC70, and PSYC08 or PSYC09. Students who have completed or are currently enrolled in NROD98, PSY400, or COGD10 are not eligible to take this course.

Course Materials:

Quercus: You can access the course website through Quercus at <http://q.utoronto.ca> using your UTOrid. Please check the course website frequently (e.g., at least once a week, before class) so that you don't miss important updates about the course. Quercus is where you will find the course syllabus (this document), view your grades, see important announcements, and turn in assignments (including your final thesis). **Any required readings will be posted to Quercus at least one week in advance of the class meeting for which they are due.** It is good practice to review your Quercus notification settings at the start of each term to ensure that new announcements and other important updates posted to the course page are forwarded to your email.

Course Requirements and Grading: Your mark for this course consists of the following:

- **Supervisor mark on your thesis (60%)**
 - Your primary supervisor provides 60% of your mark in PSYD98 based on your performance in their lab and your final research report. As such, it is **essential** that you communicate frequently with your supervisor throughout the writing process to ensure that you are meeting their expectations. Different research supervisors have

different standards for formatting, length, and content of the thesis, and the instructor of PSYD98 does not coordinate these requirements.

- **Second faculty reader mark on your thesis (15%)**
 - A second faculty member from the Psychology Department will read and provide an objective mark on your final thesis document. It is thus important that your thesis is written in such a way that it can be understood by another psychological scientist, but not necessarily one who works in your sub-field. For example, a student conducting a research project in clinical psychology may have a social psychologist as their second reader: the paper should be accessible to that person.
- **In-class mark (25%)**
 - The in-class mark is derived as follows, with further details below. Although each portion of the in-class mark is worth relatively little of your final grade, each component is designed to help you progress on your thesis and should be taken seriously.
 - *Attendance in class* (10%; 2.5% of course mark)
 - *Ethics* (10%; 2.5% of course mark)
 - *Proposal* (5%; 1.25% of course mark)
 - *Oral presentation in class* (30%; 7.5% of course mark)
 - *Draft of introduction and methods sections* (10%; 2.5% of course mark)
 - *Poster presentation on Thesis Day* (35%; 8.75% of course mark)

Attendance (10%): Class will **not** meet each week. For more information, see the calendar at the end of this document. However, for scheduled classes, attendance is mandatory unless otherwise noted in the calendar. Attendance will be taken at each mandatory class. A student may miss one class in the academic year without penalty, but failure to attend more than one class will result in deductions from the attendance portion of your mark. Students must attend at least 50% of classes in order to get credit for the in-class portion of their thesis. Students with unsatisfactory attendance will be reported to their research supervisors. No exceptions will be made to the attendance policy for any reason, including conference attendance, course conflicts, illness, or other personal conflicts.

Ethics (10%): All research involving living animals, human or non-human, must be approved by the appropriate ethics review board before the research can begin. There are three components to the ethics assignment for this course, and all students, **regardless of whether they are doing human research, animal research, or research not involving live subjects**, are expected to complete each component. Even if an ethics component in this course seems irrelevant to you right now, adequate preparation at this stage will assist you in your future research endeavours.

1. *Meeting with supervisor to determine ethics requirements; submission of form documenting meeting. **Due October 3 by 11:59pm.*** Each student must meet with their supervisor **as soon as possible** to determine what review procedures are required for their projects. In some cases, a student may be joining an ongoing project for which ethics protocols have already been filed. In other cases, a student and supervisor may be required to submit an amendment to a supervisor's existing ethics protocol. In many cases, a student is starting a new project that will require submission of a new ethics protocol in collaboration with the supervisor. **The form for you and your supervisor to complete will be available on Quercus. After completion, it should be scanned (or photographed) and uploaded to Quercus for marks.** You should schedule this meeting with your supervisor as soon as possible after the start of the term.
2. *Completing Introductory Tutorial for the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS-2). **Due October 3 by 11:59pm.*** All students, regardless of whether they are working with live humans this year or not, must complete the TCPS-2 training by navigating to: <http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel>. The training is also available in French if you prefer. **Submit your certificate of completion on Quercus.** If you already have a TCPS-2 certificate, you may submit it instead of re-taking the course. **TCPS (1) certificates do not count; you must have TCPS-2.**
3. *Training in Ethical Research with Animals. **Due October 3 by 11:59pm.*** All students, regardless of whether they are working with live animals this year or not, must complete the University of Toronto's Division of Comparative Medicine (DCM) short course on ethics in animal research. The course comprises its own Quercus page, to which all thesis students will be invited in mid-September. The course must be completed in its entirety by the deadline.

Proposal (5%): You will submit a brief (200-300 word) proposal/plan for your research project on Quercus by **11:59pm on Friday, October 11**. This proposal should include: a rationale for the research (e.g., a hole in the existing literature), a research question, hypotheses, and a brief description of the methodology. You should construct this short proposal in collaboration with your research supervisor. Note that this research proposal will likely evolve as you and your supervisor continue to meet: that's ok! **This proposal will be marked for completion.** Incomplete, disorganized, informal, or outline drafts will not receive credit.

Oral presentation (30%): At the end of the first term, we will have three classes with oral presentations. In these presentations, you will be asked to make a brief (15- to 20-minute, depending on the number of students enrolled in the course) presentation of your thesis project, in which you substantiate the proposal that you turned in in October. You should, in your presentation, make a clear

statement of the research question, hypotheses, research design, methodology, and planned data analyses. You **may**, but are not required, to present preliminary data (some, but not all, students will have data to present at that time, and your decision to do so will not affect your mark). After your presentation, you will answer questions from your classmates for up to 5 minutes, again depending on the number of students in the course. Of the 30% of your mark that this presentation comprises, 20% will be reflective of your oral presentation. 10% will be comprised of completing peer evaluations of your classmates' presentations. **It is therefore essential that you plan to attend these three classes. No exceptions will be made.** Each student's presentation date will be determined as follows: On October 25, a survey will be due in which you express your desired presentation dates (choice 1, choice 2, and choice 3). The list of students enrolled in the course will be randomized, and the first student on the list will receive their top choice. Each following student will receive their top choice if space permits, and otherwise will receive their second or third choice depending on their place on the list. **It is therefore essential that you are prepared to present on any of the three presentation dates,** however in the past all students have received their first or second choice.

Introduction and methods draft (10%): On **Friday, January 24**, we will be doing an in-class workshop to edit introduction and methods sections of the thesis. Graduate students and staff from the University Library and Writing Centre will be on hand to assist. Each student will need to bring **two hard copies** of the drafts to class on that Friday, and will need to **submit one electronic copy on Quercus before class begins at 1:10pm**. This initiative has two purposes: 1) it helps you to structure your writing schedule such that you do not leave all of the writing until the last minute in the spring, and 2) it allows you to get feedback on your drafts from your classmates and from your instructor. **These drafts will be marked for completion: 5% for the introduction and 5% for the methods section.** Incomplete, disorganized, informal, or outline drafts will not receive credit.

Poster presentation (35%): On **Monday, April 6**, all thesis students in Psychology and Neuroscience will present their work in a poster session called **Thesis Day**. This provides an opportunity to present your work and collect feedback from professors and peers. Your supervisor is responsible for paying for your poster printing, but posters will be printed by the course instructor. More details about Thesis Day will be provided later in the academic year. Electronic versions of the poster will need to be submitted by **5:00pm on Monday, March 30**. You are required to attend the entirety of Thesis Day, from roughly 10:00am to roughly 5:00pm.

Final Thesis Submission: All students must submit the final draft of their theses on Quercus and on Turnitin.com by **11:59pm on Sunday, April 5**. Late submissions will be subject to a penalty of 5% per day (or partial day) **off both the supervisor and secondary reader marks**. For example, if you turn your

thesis in at noon on April 6, you will lose 5% from your supervisor's mark and 5% from your secondary reader's mark.

Course Meeting and Deadlines Calendar

Friday, September 6	Introductions, Syllabus	
Friday, September 13	NO CLASS	
Friday, September 20	Library Research Workshop	Guest: Sarah Guay, Liaison Librarian for Psychology
Friday, September 27	Applying to Graduate School Workshop	Guest: Dr. Suzanne Erb, Chair, Department of Psychology
Friday, October 4	Ethics in Human and Animal Research; Writing a Research Proposal	All Ethics requirements due on Quercus by 11:59pm on Thursday night, October 3
Friday, October 11	NO CLASS	Proposal due by 11:59pm
Friday, October 18	NO CLASS	Reading Week
Friday, October 25	Curriculum Vitae Workshop	This workshop is open to all students in PSY and MHS, but attendance is required for students in PSYD98. Location TBD. Presentation dates survey due on Quercus by 11:59pm.
Friday, November 1	Giving effective oral presentations	
Friday, November 8	NO CLASS	
Friday, November 15	Oral presentations	
Friday, November 22	Oral presentations	
Friday, November 29	Oral presentations	
	Winter Break	
Friday, January 3	NO CLASS	
Friday, January 10	Thesis formatting	
Friday, January 17	NO CLASS	
Friday, January 24	Writing workshop 1	Introduction and methods sections due in-class (2 copies) and on Quercus by 1:10pm
Friday, January 31	Writing workshop 2 (optional attendance)	Sign up on Quercus if you plan to attend this second workshop
Friday, February 7	NO CLASS	
Friday, February 14	NO CLASS	Reading Week
Friday, February 21	Data analysis	
Friday, February 28	NO CLASS	
Friday, March 6	Poster formatting	
Friday, March 13	NO CLASS	
Friday, March 20	Writing support (optional attendance)	Sign up on Quercus if you plan to attend this writing support session
Friday, March 27	NO CLASS	.pdf of poster due on Quercus by 5:00pm on Monday, March 30
Friday, April 3	NO CLASS	Thesis due on Quercus and Turnitin by 11:59pm on Sunday, April 5
Monday, April 6	Thesis Day (Poster Presentations)	Attendance is required from approximately 10:00am to approximately 5:00pm

Policies

Please read the course policies below carefully. No exceptions can be made to the following.

1. **Ethical and Responsible Conduct:** Always treat yourself, your classmates, and your instructional team with respect both in and outside of class. This includes being on time to class, and being aware of your words and actions. Be mindful of other students during class. Please turn off or silence all mobile phones before coming to class. If you choose to take notes on a laptop, please quit/minimize any programs that may distract others (internet, messaging, Facebook, games, etc.), or sit in the back of the room where others cannot see your screen.
2. **Academic Integrity:** The University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences in papers and assignments include using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement, submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor, making up sources or facts, obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment. Note that theses are particularly susceptible to plagiarism, and you should ensure that you are carefully integrating and citing sources appropriately.
3. **Turnitin.com:** Normally, students will be required to submit their thesis to Turnitin.com for review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their thesis to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.
4. **Late Work Policy:** Late work is not accepted in PSYD98. Any work submitted after the due date and time will receive a score of 0%. For work missed due to extenuating circumstances, please see the following section: "Missed Term Work".
5. **Missed Term Work:** Everything described above is considered a required part of the class. Evaluation is most fair when all students complete all components with no special consideration being applied. However, in the case of **some** extenuating circumstances, you may apply to the Department or to the University for an exception to this missed work policy, using the procedures below. **Note that attendance is not eligible for Missed Term Work exceptions. Note also the clause regarding term work due at the**

end of the semester: because the thesis is due after the last day of classes, only extensions of 5 days or fewer can be administered by the Psychology Department. Longer extensions must be petitioned through the Registrar's Office.

Missed Term Work due to Medical Illness or Other Emergency:

All students citing a documented reason for missed term work must submit their request for accommodations **within three (3) business days** of the deadline for the missed work.

Students must submit **BOTH** of the following:

- (1.) A completed **Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form** (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), and
- (2.) **Appropriate documentation** to verify your illness or emergency, as described below.

Appropriate documentation:

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS** due to **ILLNESS**:

- Submit the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), along with a **hardcopy** of the Self-Declaration of Student Illness Form (uoft.me/PSY-self-declare-form).

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS** due to **ACCESSABILITY REASONS**:

- If your desired accommodation is **within the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (ex. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” and you need 3 days), submit the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>) and attach a copy of your letter. **Specify how many days extension you are requesting** on the request form.
- If your desired accommodation is **outside the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (ex. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” but you need more time than that) you will need to meet with your **AccessAbility consultant** and have them email Keely Hicks (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) detailing the accommodations required.

For missed assignments in **OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES**:

- Submit the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), along with:
 - In the case of a **death of a family member or friend**, please provide a copy of a death certificate.
 - For U of T varsity-level or professional **athletic commitments**, an email from your coach or varsity administrator should be sent directly to Keely Hicks (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **well in advance** of the missed work, detailing the dates and nature of the commitment.
 - For **religious accommodations**, please email (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **well in advance** of the missed work.
 - For circumstances **outside of these guidelines**, please email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) on or before the date of the test / assignment

deadline to describe your circumstances and ask what documentation would be appropriate

Documents covering the following situations are NOT acceptable: medical prescriptions, personal travel, weddings/personal/work commitments.

Procedure:

Submit your (1.) [request form](#) and (2.) [medical/self-declaration](#)/other documents in person **WITHIN 3 BUSINESS DAYS** of the missed assignment.

Submit to: Keely Hicks, Room SW420B, Monday – Friday, 9 AM – 4 PM. (Slide forms under door if out of office.)

After submitting your documentation, within approximately one to five business days, you will receive a response from your instructor detailing the accommodations to be made (if any).

You are responsible for checking your official U of T email and Quercus course announcements daily, as accommodations may be time-critical.

You should continue to work on your assignments to the best of your ability, as extension accommodations may be as short as one business day, depending on the nature of the illness/emergency.

If an accommodation has been granted but you are unable to meet the conditions of the accommodation (ex. you need a longer extension, or you missed a make-up test), you will need to repeat the missed term work procedure and submit additional forms to request further accommodation.

Completion of this form does NOT guarantee that accommodations will be made. The course instructor reserves the right to decide what accommodations (if any) will be made. Failure to adhere to any aspect of this policy may result in a denial of your request for accommodation.

Missed Accommodations

If an accommodation is granted but a continued illness/emergency prevents you from meeting the requirements of your accommodation, you must repeat the missed term work procedure to request additional accommodations.

Importance of Three Business Day window:

If you are unable to submit your documents in-person within the three-business day window, **you must email Keely** (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **within the three-business day window** to explain when you will be able to bring your documents in person. Exceptions to the documentation deadline will only be made under **exceptional circumstances**. Attach scans of your documentation, and be prepared to bring your documents to Keely in-person as soon as you are well. Late documents may not be accepted.

NOTE: Assignments due at end of term

Instructors cannot accept term work any later than five business days after the last day of class. Beyond this date, you would need to file a petition with the Registrar's Office (<https://www.utoronto.ca/registrar/term-work>).

6. Grade Changes:

Under **no circumstances** will the instructor of this course change a grade for an assignment or for the course mark. There is **no circumstance** (not a health issue, or death in the family, or impending graduation prevented by failing this course) that is compelling enough for the instructor to do so. The **only changes** made to the course marks will be the ones provided to everyone, as detailed above in the section on Grade Norms. That is the only method that ensures fairness for everyone. **Again, there are no exceptions here.** Every semester Kyle has to tell students “no”, even when they present compelling excuses. Please do not put Kyle in the awkward position of telling you “no” when you ask for a grade change. It will absolutely, under no circumstances, happen. You may, as always, petition the Registrar’s Office if you believe that your mark has been calculated incorrectly.

7. AccessAbility:

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services as soon as possible. AccessAbility Services staff (located in Rm SW302, Science Wing) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations 416-287-7560 or email ability@utsc.utoronto.ca. The sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

- 8. Religious Accommodation:** The University has a commitment concerning accommodation for religious observances. I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. According to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (like a test, or in-class assignment) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements. I am aware that, due to scheduling circumstances outside my control, the first midterm exam in this course falls on Yom Kippur. If you foresee the need to miss this exam for observance of this Holy Day, please let me know as soon as possible and I will happily schedule a make-up exam for you.