PSYD98: THESIS IN PSYCHOLOGY FALL-WINTER 2021-2022

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.

Instructor & Contact Information

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I would love to meet with each of you throughout the year! Please feel free to email me to set up a one-on-one appointment.

Prerequisites

Admission to PSYD98 requires the supervision of a faculty member in the Department of Psychology at UTSC, or the supervision of a researcher outside UTSC with the co-supervision of an internal faculty member. More information regarding admission to the course can be found on the UTSC Department of Psychology website.

Additionally, students must ordinarily have the following prerequisites to enrol in the course:
- Specialist or Major in PSY or MHS
- cGPA of 3.3 or higher over the last 5.0 credits compoleted
- Completion of the following courses or their equivalents: PSYC02, PSYC70, and [PSYC08 or PSYC09]

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)

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Course Materials

All materials for this course are accessible through Quercus (q.utoronto.ca) using your UTORid. There are no required materials to purchase. It is essential that you check Quercus frequently, preferably by having your email notifications turned on and monitoring your University of Toronto email address. All course announcements and changes will be communicated in this manner.

Class Meetings

Meetings for this course will take place online via Zoom, accessible through Quercus. Class will **not** meet each week, so be sure to see the course calendar below for the schedule. During class, you are strongly encouraged to keep your camera on to foster a sense of course community and to get to know one another! Attendance is mandatory (see policy).

Course Grades

Your mark in PSYD98 is determined as follows. Details regarding each of these components can be found elsewhere in this document:

60% **Thesis supervisor's mark**
15% **Secondary reader's mark**
25% **In-class components**

Thesis Supervisor Mark (60%)

The bulk of your grade in PSYD98 is determined by your thesis supervisor based on your final paper and your performance in their lab throughout the year. As such, it is **essential** that you maintain consistent communication with your thesis supervisor regarding their expectations and your progress.

In-class components (25%)

25% of your thesis mark comes from work you do in the thesis class. The in-class work is broken down as follows:

Ethics (10%)
Thesis Proposal (10%)
Oral Presentation (30%)
Introduction and Methods Drafts (15%)
Final Poster Presentation (35%)

Secondary Reader Mark (15%)

To ensure objectivity in grading, your thesis will also be read by another faculty member in Psychology, who will anonymously provide a grade on your paper. This reader will be a psychological scientist, but your thesis may be outside their area of specialization. You should be sure to write your thesis in a way that is accessible to such a person.

Thesis Submission

Your final thesis paper must be submitted **as one document in .pdf format on Quercus by 11:59pm on Sunday, April 10.**

Late submissions will be penalized at 5% per day (or partial day) off **each** the primary supervisor and secondary reader marks.

Although you are strongly encouraged to work directly with your supervisor on drafts of your thesis, **only the copy submitted to Quercus will be marked.**

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In-class components (25% of total course grade)

Ethics (10% of in-class grade)

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. 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. Ethics requirements are due on Quercus by **11:59pm on September 30.**

1. **Meeting with supervisor to determine ethics requirements; submission of form documenting meeting.** Each student must meet with their supervisor as soon as possible to determine what review procedures are required for their projects. You should schedule this meeting with your supervisor as soon as possible after the start of the term. 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.

2. **Completing Introductory Tutorial for the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS-2).** 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://tcps2core.ca/welcome. 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.** 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.

Thesis Proposal (10% of in-class grade)

By 11:59pm on October 15, you must submit on Quercus a brief proposal for your thesis project. 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 throughout the year: that's ok! This proposal will be marked for completion. Incomplete, disorganized, informal, or outline drafts will not receive credit. The proposal should be approximately 300-500 words in length.

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SCARBOROUGH

In-class components (25% of total course grade)

Oral Presentation (30% of in-class grade)

In mid- to late-**November**, we will have three classes with online 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 earlier in the term. 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. Much more information will be available later in the term, including a detailed marking rubric.

Each student's **presentation date** will be determined as follows: By **11:59pm on October 22**, 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 Drafts (15% of in-class grade)

On **January 28 by 11:59pm**, you will need to turn in a **draft** of the introduction section of your thesis. This drafts will be distributed to two of your peers in the class, who will work with you to provide edits and suggestions. You, in turn, will provide edits to two peers by **11:59pm on February 4**. This process will be repeated on **February 11** and **February 20** for the methods section of the thesis. Turning in of the drafts and working with your peers will both be marked for completion. This process ensures that 1) you do not leave all the writing to the last minute, and 2) that you benefit from both giving and receiving peer feedback. Peer feedback is worth 20% of this grade.

Poster Presentations (35% of in-class grade)

During typical academic years, PSYD98 culminates with an in-person Thesis Day on campus. This day is a celebration of the hard work you have done all year, and an opportunity for you to present your research in a conference poster format. This poster and presentation will be worth 35% of your in-class grade. The format of Thesis Day 2022 will be determined based on the public health situation in the winter. In any case, please reserve the following dates in your calendar tentatively:

    -Monday, April 4, 2022: Electronic posters due on Quercus by 11:59pm
    -Monday, April 11, 2022, 10:00am-4:00pm, in-person Thesis Day

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Course Calendar

PSYD98 does not meet every week. Much of your work in this course comes from your laboratory research and writing. However, you must attend the sessions listed here. Please see policies below regarding attendance.

Date	Topic	Items due/due dates
September 10	Introductory Meeting	Research survey due by 11:59pm, Friday, September 17
September 24	Library Research Workshop Guest: Sarah Guay, UTSC Library	Ethics components (3) due by 11:59pm, Thursday, September 30
October 1	Ethics in Human and Animal Research; Writing a Research Proposal	
October 8	Applying to Graduate School Guest: Prof. Jon Cant	Research proposal due by 11:59pm, Friday, October 15
October 22	Writing and Maintaining an Academic CV + Giving Effective Oral Presentations	Presentation dates survey due by 11:59pm, Friday, October 22
November 12, 19, 26	Class Presentations	
January 14	Thesis Formatting	
January 21	Writing Workshop with Faculty and Staff from the UTSC Writing Centre and Library	Introduction draft due by 11:59pm, Friday, January 28 Peer review due by 11:59pm, Friday, February 4
February 11	Data Analysis Workshop	Methods draft due by 11:59pm, Friday, February 11 Peer review due by 11:59pm, Sunday, February 20
March 11	Poster Formatting	Electronic poster due by 11:59pm, Monday, April 4 Thesis due by 11:59pm, Sunday, April 10
April 11 (Monday)	Thesis Day, 10:00am-4:00pm **in person**	

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Course Policies

Please read these course policies carefully before commencing work on your thesis.

Attendance: Attendance at all scheduled PSYD98 meetings is mandatory. Attendance will be taken at each session. Failure to attend at least 50% of the scheduled meetings *in either term* may result in failure of the course. Students whose attendance record is low will be asked to meet with the course instructor and with their supervisor at the end of the fall term.

Ethical and Responsible Conduct: Please treat yourself, your classmates, and your instructional team with respect both in and outside of class. The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

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.

Plagiarism Detection: Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (https://uoft.me/pdt-faq).

Lecture Recordings: This course, including your participation, will be recorded on video and will be available to students in the course for viewing remotely and after each session. Course videos and materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other source depending on the specific facts of each situation, and are protected by copyright. In this course, you are permitted to download session videos and materials for your own academic use, but you should not copy, share, or use them for any other purpose without the explicit permission of the instructor. For questions about recording and use of videos in which you appear please contact your instructor.

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".

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. These policies below are standard for all courses in Psychology at UTSC. Note the clause below regarding term work due at the end of the semester: ***because the thesis is due after the last day of classes, only extensions of until April 15 can be administered by the Psychology Department. Longer extensions must be petitioned through the Registrar's Office.***

For missed term work (assignments and term tests) due to illness, emergency, or other mitigating circumstances, please follow the procedures outlined below.
The following reasons are **not** considered sufficient for missed term work: travel for leisure, weddings, personal commitments, work commitments, human error.

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.utsc.utoronto.ca/registrar/term-work

Accommodations for Illness or Emergency:
For missed work due to ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY, complete the following **three-step** process:
1. Complete the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form (http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW)
2. Declare your absence on ACORN (Profile & Settings > Absence Declaration)
3. Email both the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form **AND** a screenshot of your Self-Declared Absence on ACORN to the email address provided by your instructor on the course syllabus **WITHIN 2 BUSINESS DAYS** of the missed work.

Note: If you are unable to submit your documents within 2-business days, **you must still email your instructor within the 2-business day window** to explain the nature of the delay, and when you will be able to provide your documents. Exceptions to the documentation deadline will only be made under **exceptional circumstances**.
Note: For this semester, we do not require any additional supporting documentation (e.g. medical notes) to support your missed term work accommodation request.

Accommodations for Religious Conflicts:
For missed term work due to a RELIGIOUS CONFLICT, please complete the following process:
Complete the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form (http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW), choosing "Other" and noting "Religious conflict" in the space provided.
Email the form to your course instructor **at least two weeks (10 business days) before the date of the activity,** or as soon as possible if it was not possible to identify the conflict earlier.

Accommodations for Time Zone Conflicts:
If you are physically in a different time zone and a quiz or midterm is scheduled outside of 7:00am to midnight in your local time, please complete the following process:
Complete the Time Zone Conflict Form (https://uoft.me/PSY-TimeZone), and
Email the form to your course instructor **at least two weeks (10 business days) before the date of the activity,** or as soon as possible, if it was not possible to identify the conflict earlier.

Accommodations for Students Registered with AccessAbility Services:

If your desired accommodation is **within the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (e.g. your letter includes "extensions of up to 7 days" and you need 3 days):

> Complete the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form.
>
> Email the form and your **Accommodation Letter** to your instructor, specifying how many days extension you are requesting.

If your desired accommodation is **outside the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (e.g. your letter includes "extensions of up to 7 days" but you need more time than that):

> **Contact your AccessAbility consultant** and have them email your instructor detailing the accommodations required.

Accommodation Procedure:

After submitting your documentation, you will receive a response from your instructor or TA. This form does not guarantee that you will be accommodated. 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. **You are responsible for checking your official U of T email and Quercus course announcements daily**, as accommodations may be time-critical.

For missed assignments, **do not wait for an instructor response to resume work on your assignment.** Extension accommodations may be as short as one business day, depending on the nature of the illness/emergency. You should complete your assignment as soon as you are able and email it your instructor.

For an anticipated event (e.g. scheduled surgery or an illness with a prolonged recovery period), submit a Verification of Illness Form completed by your doctor, AND this form to your instructor if you would like to request accommodations in advance of the assignment deadline or midterm date. **Declare your future absence on ACORN (absences can be declared up to 14 days in the future).**

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. **Please make it clear in your subject line that you are requesting a second accommodation.** For example, if you are given an extension but are still sick and need more time, or if you miss a make-up midterm, you must submit another request 'Missed Term Work Accommodations' form and declare your extended absence on ACORN. ***Note: In the case of a missed make-up test, an opportunity to write a second make-up test may not be provided.

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 Office as soon as possible.

AccessAbility Services staff (located in Rm AA142, Arts and Administration Building) 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.