

Research Seminar (PSY5198)
Course Syllabus
Fall 2017

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Office hours: W 9:30-11 and F 11-12 and
by appointment

Office phone: 512-245-8710
Class Location: UAC 206
Class Days and Time: Wednesdays 8:30 –
9:20 and 12:30-1:20
Course website: <http://tracs.txstate.edu>

Course Description: Taken in two consecutive semesters, this seminar provides an orientation to the graduate program, and the steps required for thesis completion. Topics include the discussion of research interests, critiquing literature, and topic selection; developing and submitting a research proposal, selecting a thesis committee, and thesis completion and submission.

Course Objectives: Provide an orientation to the Master of Arts in Psychological Research program through a focus on the following topics:

1. **Thesis Project Development**, through:

- Identification of research interests; selection of an appropriate research design; determining the appropriate methods and procedures to carry out the proposed research; and, thesis proposal development – all completed in regular consultation with the student's mentor.
- Fostering effective oral and written communication skills and critical thinking.

2. **Research Management Skills**, through:

- Developing a research protocol and manual of operations for a particular study, including recruitment and running participant appointments.
- Submitting applications to the IRB and practicing principles of ethical conduct in research.
- Fostering professionalism and career development.

Required Reading: MAPR Graduate Handbook and selected readings to be posted on TRACS

Course Policies:

1. **Attendance:** Attendance is expected in class. In the event of illness or another emergency situation, students are expected to obtain notes and relevant materials from a classmate before contacting me regarding missed material. Assignments are due on the deadlines listed except in extenuating circumstances (e.g., serious personal illness or family emergency). In the instance that one of these rare events occurs around an assignment deadline, you must contact me prior to the deadline (or within 24 hours after) and written documentation must be provided (e.g., doctor's note).
2. **Mobile phone/laptop usage:** Please turn to vibrate all cell phones prior to the start of class. You may use laptops/tablets to take notes only during class (i.e., please refrain from surfing the internet, playing games, and other disruptive behaviors).
3. **Academic Honesty:** In accordance with Texas State University policies, academic dishonesty/plagiarism and cheating are unacceptable. Please take note of and abide by the Texas

State policy: “Violation of the Honor Code includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.” (UPPS 7.10.01) Academic dishonesty includes copying off another person on an exam, using outside sources signing another student’s name on an attendance record, or in written work, paraphrasing from a reference source without an appropriate citation or not using direct quotes and a citation for more than four words taken from an outside source. Appropriate penalties in accordance with university and department policy will be enforced for academic dishonesty (e.g., Grade of “F” on assignment/exam in question, Honor Code violation filed, etc.).

4. **Students with Disabilities:** Students with special needs (as documented by the Office of Disability Services) should identify themselves to me at the beginning of the semester. Texas State is dedicated to providing these students with necessary academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to facilitate their participation and performance in the classroom.
5. **Assessment:** The Department of Psychology has adopted expected student learning outcomes for the undergraduate major, the graduate major, and for PSY 1300, a general education course meeting a requirement for the social and behavioral science component. These expected student learning outcomes are available for your review at the following website:
<http://www.psych.txstate.edu/undergraduate/assessment.html>

Course Requirements:

****Please consult your mentor as needed or required with each of these assignments. ****

1. Curriculum Vitae

- You will draft your CV including the following sections: personal information, education, honors/awards/scholarships, relevant research experience/skills, teaching experience, presentations/publications, professional affiliations, professional service and other categories as needed.
- Examples will be provided
- The CV will be due on Sept. 13 by 5 pm via TRACS

2. Summary of Research Interests

- Write a 200 word summary of your research interests.
- This summary will be posted with your picture on the MAPR website.
- See examples here from previous cohorts of graduate students:
<http://www.psych.txstate.edu/graduate/mapr/D---New-Sept-2016-studentsalumni/Current-Cohorts-landing-Sept-2016.html>
- Summaries are due Sept. 27 by 5pm on TRACS

3. Research Interest Presentations

- Create an approximately 10 minute PowerPoint presentation discussing your research interests (your thesis topic should be a piece of the presentation if you have multiple interests).
- This presentation may include definitions/key terminology, psychological theories, statistics, and/or examples of major past studies relevant to your interests
- Use your research interest summary due Sept. 27 as the starting point to creating your presentation
- You will use Sign Up on TRACS to sign up for presentation slots (Oct. 11, 18, and 25).

3. References List for 3 citations

- After our visit to the library to learn about library resources with the Psychology Librarian, please prepare an APA style references list for 3 citations relevant to your area of research: one article, one book, and one chapter in edited volume.
- The references list will be due Oct. 18 by 5 pm on TRACS

5. Outline Presentations

- Create a PowerPoint presentation that is an outline of your literature review for your thesis
- From this outline, fill in the spaces to write your final paper for this class.
- Consult your thesis mentor as you develop your presentation; they may, for example, point you to relevant authors in your field.

6. Final Paper

- Write the literature review for your thesis – **in regular consultation with your thesis mentor.**
- Your literature review should conform to the Graduate College's formatting guidelines
- I will check in your mentor several times throughout the semester, and I will ask him/her for final approval of your literature review. **Mentor approval is required for submission.**

Grading:

Course grades will be computed as follows:

Class participation	20%
Presentations/Written assignments	50%
Final Paper (Literature review for thesis)	30%

This schedule may be subject to minor changes.

Week	Date	Topic
Week 1	Aug. 30	Introduction: Courses and program requirements
Week 2	Sept. 6	Thesis/program timeline; creating a CV
Week 3	Sept. 13	Identification/development of research interests CV due at 5pm on TRACS
Week 4	Sept. 20	Selecting a thesis chair and committee; pictures for MAPR website
Week 5	Sept. 27	Library resources. Class to be held at Alkek Library. Summary of research interests (200 words max) – due at 5 pm on TRACS
Week 6	Oct. 4	Conducting literature reviews and critiquing research

Week 7	Oct. 11	Research interest presentations
Week 8	Oct. 18	Research interest presentations References list for 3 citations relevant to your area of research: one article, one book, one chapter in edited volume – due 5 pm on TRACS
Week 9	Oct. 25	Research interest presentations/research design and methodology
Week 10	Nov. 1	Writing an outline for your literature review
Week 11	Nov. 8	Resources for thesis research
Week 12	Nov. 15	Outline presentations
Week 13	Nov. 22	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK
Week 14	Nov. 29	Outline presentations
Week 15	Dec. 6	Outline presentations/Progress reports Thesis committee form due in class

FINAL PAPER due Wednesday December 13, 5 pm on TRACS