

Psychology 598-A
Honours Thesis and Seminar
Fall 2015

Instructor:	Dr. Susan D. Boon	Lecture Location:	SA 247
Phone:	403-220-5564	Lecture Days/Time:	TR 15:30-16:45
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Course Description and Goals

This course is required of all honours students and is intended to facilitate completion of the honours thesis and the development of research-related skills. The major goals of this course are to 1) develop your presentation skills, 2) increase your knowledge of the different areas of psychological research, 3) enhance your understanding of how psychological research is conducted, 4) increase your understanding of the ethical issues involved in psychological research, 5) learn about applying for scholarships and graduate programs, and 6) help prepare you for graduate and professional level training.

The fall session seminars will consist of presentations on important information related to the honours thesis (e.g., the process of applying for ethics approval), information on graduate scholarships and programs, and instructions on how to prepare both a 3 Minute Thesis presentation and a proposal presentation. Each student will deliver two presentations in the fall session: a 3 Minute Thesis presentation and a proposal presentation (the details of both of which are described below). The winter session will include several information seminars and each student will deliver another presentation on their thesis research (the research presentation). All students will present their research at the Student Research Conference **April 29, 2016**.

Prerequisites

Restricted to students registered in the psychology honours program.

Required Text

There is no required text.

Evaluation

Component	Proportion of grade	Due date
Honours project and written thesis	85%	April 15, 2015
3-minute thesis (3MT) presentation	2%	September 29, October 1, and October 6

Fall proposal presentation	6%	October 29 through to December 3, 3 presentations per class
Winter presentation	7%	TBD
Peer feedback forms**	0	Throughout term
Attendance at undergraduate conference**	0	April 29, 2016

There are two components to the evaluation in PSYC 598:

- 1) the **honours project** and **written thesis**, worth 85% of the final grade, and
- 2) **seminar participation**, worth 15% of the final grade, which includes 3 graded presentations and 2 ungraded components

Detailed information on both of these requirements is provided below.

1. The Honours Thesis (85% of the final grade)

Students will complete a thesis research project under the supervision of a full-time faculty member or an adjunct faculty member. Graduate students may be involved in supervision, but they are not formally considered to be supervisors or co-supervisors. The thesis must involve original data collection and/or data analysis. Students should clarify supervisor's expectations for the thesis project before the course begins.

The thesis supervisor must arrange a second reader for the student's thesis. If the supervisor is an adjunct faculty member, then the second reader must be a full-time faculty member in the Department of Psychology. The supervisor must email the name and email address of the second reader to psycugrd@ucalgary.ca by **November 5, 2015**.

The completed honours thesis is to be submitted **no later than Friday, April 15, 2016**. Identical copies of the thesis must be submitted to the supervisor, the second reader, and the Psychology Department. To submit your thesis to the Department, email an electronic copy to psycugrd@ucalgary.ca. Students should consult with their supervisors and second readers to determine whether they prefer to receive a hard copy of the thesis, an electronic copy, or both.

Students seeking an extension for completion of the thesis beyond **April 15, 2016** must complete an Application for Deferment of Term Work and submit it to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts for approval (see the University of Calgary Calendar for regulations). A Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm deferral for health or personal reasons.

Ethics certification (if required) must be in place by **February 1, 2016** or the student may be required to withdraw from the Honours program due to lack of satisfactory progress. Supervisors are responsible for forwarding appropriate documentation to Dr. Boon on or before this date to demonstrate that ethics certification has been obtained. Documentation of ethics certification should be emailed to psychdir@ucalgary.ca.

The supervisor and second reader will independently evaluate the student's thesis and will complete an **Honours Thesis Feedback Form**, which will be emailed to Dr. Boon at psychdir@ucalgary.ca.

The supervisor and second reader will discuss the student's grade for the honours project and written thesis (worth 85% of the final grade) and the supervisor will submit a letter grade recommendation to Dr. Boon. In the unlikely event of a disagreement between the supervisor and the second reader, Dr. Boon will provide an independent assessment of the thesis, and the final grade will reflect the average of the three assessments. The supervisor must email Dr. Boon (psychdir@ucalgary.ca) no later than **April 29, 2016**, indicating the student's recommended thesis letter grade for the honours project and document; both the supervisor and second reader's Honours Thesis Feedback Forms must be attached to this email.

2. Seminar participation (15% of the final grade)

Dr. Boon will assign this portion of the grade based on students' 3 Minute Thesis, proposal, and research presentations. More information on these and additional mandatory components of seminar participation is provided below. The supervisor will be informed of the student's presentation feedback at or before the end of each term.

a. 3 minute thesis presentation (2% of final grade)

Students will deliver a short, 3-minute presentation that outlines the goals and importance of the research they will be conducting for their honours project. Information on how to prepare the 3MT presentation will be provided in class on September 22. Peers will provide brief written feedback on the content and delivery of the 3MT (format yet TBD).

b. Proposal presentation (Fall; 6% of final grade) and Research presentation (Winter; 7% of final grade)
Students will give two 12-minute oral presentations using PowerPoint. The Fall proposal presentation will outline the proposed thesis research (background research, research question, proposed methods, predictions). The Winter research presentation will describe the entire honours project (including results and interpretation, limitations, and ideas for future research). Each presentation will be followed by a question and discussion period. Dr. Boon will provide feedback on both the content and delivery of your presentations and assign a letter grade. Students will use the scale "Excellent", "Very Good", "Good", "Satisfactory", "Needs improvement" to rate other presenters. They will also provide brief written feedback on each presentation. The honours seminar will provide extensive information and guidance to prepare for these presentations.

Although no grades are assigned for the following two components of the course, they are both compulsory.

c. Seminar participation

Participation during the seminar **is required**. Students will provide feedback on each other's presentations (including the 3MT presentations) and will contribute to discussions and seminar activities.

d. Department of Psychology Student Research Conference

Each student will present a paper or poster at the Student Research Conference on **Friday, April 29, 2016**. Due to program constraints the number of paper presentations will be limited. Paper presentations will be 12 minutes. Students giving poster presentations will be responsible for creating and printing their own posters (examples of posters can be found in the halls of the Administration Building). This conference is an important milestone in students' academic careers and an excellent opportunity to share their research with a receptive audience.

Department of Psychology Grade Distribution Policy

The distribution of grades in Psychology courses (the percentage of A grades, B grades, etc.) will be similar to the distribution of grades in other courses in the Faculty of Arts. The Department monitors the grade distributions of 200-, 300-, and 400-level courses in the Faculty to ensure that the grade distributions in Psychology courses are comparable. Based on these reviews, students can expect that 1) up to 30% of grades in 200- and 300-level psychology courses will be “A” grades (A+, A, and A-), and 2) up to 40% of grades 400-level psychology courses will be “A” grades.

Department of Psychology Criteria for Letter Grades

Psychology professors use the following criteria when assigning letter grades:

A+ grade: *Exceptional Performance.* An A+ grade indicates near perfect performance on multiple choice and short answer exams. For research papers/essays/course projects/presentations, an A+ grade is awarded for exceptional work deserving of special recognition and is therefore not a common grade.

A, A- Range: *Excellent Performance.* Superior understanding of course material. Written work is very strong in terms of critical and original thinking, content, organization, and the expression of ideas, and demonstrates student’s thorough knowledge of subject matter.

B Range: *Good Performance.* Above average understanding of course material. Written work shows evidence of critical thinking and attention to organization and editing but could be improved in form and/or content.

C Range: *Satisfactory Performance.* Adequate understanding of course material. Knowledge of basic concepts and terminology is demonstrated. Written work is satisfactory and meets essential requirements but could be improved significantly in form and content. Note: All prerequisites for courses offered by the Faculty of Arts must be met with a minimum grade of C-.

D range: *Marginally meets standards.* Minimal understanding of subject matter. Written work is marginally acceptable and meets basic requirements but requires substantial improvements in form and content. Student has not mastered course material at a level sufficient for advancement into more senior courses in the same or related subjects.

F grade: *Course standards not met.* Inadequate understanding of subject matter. Written work does not meet basic requirements. Student has not demonstrated knowledge of course material at a level sufficient for course credit.

Grading Scale

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor’s discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between

two letter grades. To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (e.g., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90% = A but 89.4% will be rounded down to 89% = A-).

Tentative Lecture Schedule

Date	Topic/Activity/Readings/Due Date
T Sep 8	Introduction to the Honours Seminar, Seminar Requirements, and Student Introductions
R Sep 10	Applying for Research Ethics (Dr. Boyce)/ Research Participation System Access (Dr. Sears)
T Sep 15	Careers for psychology majors (Dr. Boyes)/Applying for admission to graduate studies in experimental psychology (Dr. Boon)
R Sep 17	Applying for admission to graduate studies in clinical (Dr. Campbell) and counseling psychology (Dr. Schroeder)
F Sep 18	<i>Last day to drop full courses (Multi-term) and Fall Term half courses. No refunds for full courses (Multi-term) or Fall Term half courses after this date.</i>
M Sep 21	<i>Last day to add or swap full courses (Multi-term) and Fall Term half courses. Last day for change of registration from audit to credit or credit to audit.</i>
T Sep 22	How to prepare a 3 Minute Thesis presentation (Tara Christie, FGS)
R Sep 24	Graduate scholarships (Jamie Pryde, FGS)/How to write a good application for graduate scholarships (Dr. Pexman)
F Sep 25	<i>Fee payment deadline for Fall Term full and half courses.</i>
T Sep 29	3MT presentations (1)
R Oct 1	3MT presentations (2)
T Oct 6	3MT presentations (3)
R Oct 8	Preparing a Proposal Presentation (Dr. Boon)
M Oct 12	<i>Thanksgiving Day, University closed (except Taylor Family Digital Library, Law, Medical, Gallagher and Business Libraries). No lectures.</i>
T Oct 13	Advice for Presenters (Dr. Boon)
R Oct 15	TBA or no class
T Oct 20	TBA or no class
R Oct 22	TBA or no class
T Oct 27	TBA or no class
R Oct 29	3 Proposal Presentations
T Nov 3	3 Proposal Presentations
R Nov 5	3 Proposal Presentations
T Nov 10	3 Proposal Presentations
Nov 11-15	Reading Days. No lectures.
W Nov 11	<i>Remembrance Day (Observed). University Closed (except Taylor Family Digital Library, Law, Medical, Gallagher and Business Libraries). No lectures.</i>
R Nov 12	Reading Days. No lectures.
T Nov 17	3 Proposal Presentations
R Nov 19	3 Proposal Presentations
T Nov 24	3 Proposal Presentations
R Nov 26	3 Proposal Presentations
T Dec 1	3 Proposal Presentations

R Dec 3	2 Proposal Presentations
T Dec 8	<i>Fall Term Lectures End. Last day to withdraw with permission from Fall Term half courses.</i>
Dec 11-22	<i>Fall Term Exam Period.</i>

Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class; no reappraisal of term work is permitted after the 15 days. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

Academic Accommodation

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services ; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf .

Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

Absence From A Test/Exam

Makeup tests/exams are **NOT** an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test/exam for health reasons; the student will be required to pay any cost associated with this Statement. Students who miss a test/exam have up to 48 hours to contact the instructor and to schedule a makeup test/exam. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam. At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam during exam make-up hours provided by the department <http://psychology.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/exam-and-course-information#mues>. If a student cannot make write their final exam on the date assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred_final. Under no circumstances will this be accommodated by the department.

Travel During Exams

Consistent with University regulations, students are expected to be available to write scheduled exams at any time during the official December and April examination periods. Requests to write a make-up exam because of conflicting travel plans (e.g., flight bookings) will NOT be considered by the department. Students are advised to wait until the final examination schedule is posted before making any travel arrangements. If a student cannot make write their final exam on the date assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred_final. Under no circumstances will this be accommodated by the department.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act

The FOIP legislation disallows the practice of having student's retrieve tests and assignments from a public place. Therefore, tests and assignments may be returned to students during class/lab, or during office hours, or via the Department Office (Admin 255), or will be made available only for viewing during exam review sessions scheduled by the Department. Tests and assignments will be shredded after one year. Instructors should take care to not link students' names with their grades, UCIDs, or other FOIP-sensitive information.

Evacuation Assembly Point

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>. Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

Student Organizations

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in Administration 170 and may be contacted at 403-220-5567.

Student Union VP Academic: Phone: 403-220-3911

suvpaca@ucalgary.ca

Student Union Faculty Rep.: Phone: 403-220-3913

socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca

Student Ombudsman's Office

The Office of the Student Ombudsmen provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. The office can be reached at 403-220-6420 or ombuds@ucalgary.ca (<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>).

Safewalk

The safewalk program provides volunteers to walk students safely to their destination anywhere on campus. This service is free and available 24 hrs/day, 365 days a year.
Call 403-220-5333.

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course with no “W” notation and **still receive a tuition fee refund** is **September 18, 2015**. Last day for registration/change of registration is **September 21, 2015**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **December 8, 2015**.