



Psychology 598-B

Honours Thesis and Seminar

Fall 2014 & Winter 2015

Instructor:	Dr. Susan D. Boon	Lecture Location:	ST 126
Phone:	403-220-5223	Lecture Days/Time:	TR 15:30-16:45
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Office:	Admin 231C or Admin 255		
Office Hours:	By Appointment		

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 to 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 give a proposal presentation. Each student will then give a proposal presentation (the details of which are described below). The winter session will begin with several information seminars, and then each student will give another presentation on their thesis research (the research presentation). All students will present their research at the Student Research Conference (**May 1, 2015**).

Prerequisites

Restricted to students registered in the psychology honours program.

Required Text

There is no required text.

Evaluation

There are two components to the evaluation:

- 1) the **honours project** and **written thesis** (85% of the final grade), and
- 2) **seminar participation** (15% of the final grade), which includes 3 presentations (13.5% of the final grade) and participation in the weekly seminars (1.5% of the final grade).

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 3, 2014**.

The completed honours thesis is to be submitted **no later than Friday, April 17, 2015**. Identical copies of the thesis must be submitted to the supervisor, the second reader, and the Psychology Department (**Admin 255**). Each copy must be bound with a clear plastic cover and a coil binding. The Psychology Department must receive both an electronic copy (email to: psycugrd@ucalgary.ca) and a printed copy for the Department's Honours Thesis Library.

Students seeking an extension for completion of the thesis beyond April 17, 2015 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 **January 30, 2015** or the student may be required to withdraw from the Honours program due to lack of satisfactory progress.

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. 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 make 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 **May 1, 2015**, indicating the student's recommended thesis letter grade for the honours project and document; the supervisor and second reader's Honours Thesis Feedback Forms must both 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' proposal and research presentations, their seminar participation, and their participation in the Psychology Student Research Conference. More information on these requirements is provided below.

a. **Proposal presentation** (Fall; 5% 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. The honours seminar will provide extensive information and guidance to prepare for these presentations. The supervisor will be informed of the student’s presentation feedback at the end of each term.

b. Seminar participation (1.5% of final grade)

Participation during the seminar is required. Students will provide feedback on each other’s presentations and will contribute to discussions and seminar activities. Students will receive a letter grade for seminar participation at the end of the fall and winter session based on the number of presentations for which they provide formal feedback:

A+ = 40-42	A = 38-39	A- = 36-37
B+ = 34-35	B = 32-33	B- = 30-31
C+ = 28-29	C = 26-27	C- = 24-25
D+ = 23	D = 22	
F = 21 and below		

Dr. Boon will discuss her expectations for feedback during the first class in September.

The supervisor will be informed of the student’s seminar participation at the end of each term.

c. Department of Psychology Student Research Conference (1.5% of final grade)

Each student will present a paper or poster at the Student Research Conference on **Friday, May 1, 2015**. 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 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.

Tentative Lecture Schedule (Psychology 598 Winter 2015)

Date	Topic/Activity
T Jan 13	Welcome back/Planning/Presentation Dates/Feedback on Proposal Presentations <i>Winter Term Lectures begin.</i>
R Jan 15	Planning and Writing an Honours Thesis
T Jan 20	Planning and Writing an Honours Thesis
R Jan 22	Creating an Effective Poster for Scientific Conferences (L. Wenger)
F Jan 23	<i>Last day to drop Winter Term half-courses.</i>
M Jan 26	<i>Last day to add or swap Winter Term half courses. Last day for change of registration from audit to credit or credit to audit.</i>
T Jan 27	NO SEMINAR
R Jan 29	NO SEMINAR
F Jan 30	<i>Deadline for proof of ethics certification Fee payment deadline for Winter Term fees.</i>
T Feb 3	NO SEMINAR
R Feb 5	NO SEMINAR
T Feb 10	Effective Research Presentations
R Feb 12	Effective Research Presentations
Feb 15-22	<i>Reading Week. No lectures. University open (except Family Day).</i>
M Feb 16	<i>Alberta Family Day, University closed (except Taylor Family Digital Library, Law, Medical, Gallagher and Business Libraries). No lectures.</i>
T Feb 24	NO SEMINAR
R Feb 26	2 Presentations
T Mar 3	3 Presentations
R Mar 5	3 Presentations
T Mar 10	3 Presentations
R Mar 12	3 Presentations
T Mar 17	3 Presentations
R Mar 19	3 Presentations

T Mar 24	3 Presentations
R Mar 26	3 Presentations
T Mar 31	3 Presentations
R Apr 2	3 Presentations
T Apr 7	3 Presentations
R Apr 9	3 Presentations
T Apr 14	3 Presentations
W Apr 15	<i>Winter Term Lectures End.</i>
M Apr 14	<i>Last day to withdraw from full courses and Winter Term half courses.</i>
F May 1	Undergraduate Research Conference
Apr 19-29	<i>Winter Term Final Examinations.</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

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. 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 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.

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 except under exceptional circumstances. Students are advised to wait until the final examination schedule is posted before making any travel arrangements.

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 Ombuds 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 19, 2014**. Last day for registration/change of registration is **September 22, 2014**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **April 15, 2015**.