

PSYC 598
Honours Thesis and Seminar
Winter 2023

Instructor:	Dr. Simon Spanswick	Lecture Location:	SA 129
Phone:	403-220-4948	Lecture Days/Time:	TR 15:30-16:45
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Course Description

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 the 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 will focus 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 a proposal presentation. Each student will deliver a proposal presentation in the fall term (details below). The winter session will include several information workshops (e.g. how to prepare an effective scientific poster, how to write a thesis) and each student will deliver another presentation on their thesis research. Students will also prepare a research poster and secure feedback on that poster from their peers. All students will present their research at the Student Research Conference on **April 28, 2023** (date to be confirmed).

Course Learning Outcomes

The Department of Psychology is committed to student knowledge and skill development. The table below lists the key learning outcomes for this course, the program-learning outcomes they facilitate (see <https://live-arts.ucalgary.ca/psychology/about#program-learning-outcomes>), and the expected level of achievement.

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Methods	PLO(s)	Level(s)
Conduct and/or analyze the results of a research study under the supervision of a faculty member.	Thesis	3,2	A,A
Prepare a detailed written report that describes, interprets, and draws appropriate conclusions from the results of a research project	Thesis	5,4,3,2,1	A,A,A,A,A
Critically evaluate others' research presentations in a constructive and professional manner	In class	2	A
Deliver effective presentations accessible to a broad audience	Oral presentations	5,4,2,1	A,A,A,A
Answer questions about one's own research in an intelligent, thoughtful, and professional manner	In class	5,4,2,1	A,A,A,A
Prepare a poster presenting key findings of one's own research	Poster	5,4,2,1	A,A,A,A

Notes. PLOs = Program-Learning Outcomes: 1 = demonstrate knowledge of psychological sciences, 2 = think critically and solve problems, 3 = conduct research and analyze data, 4 = communicate effectively, 5 = demonstrate

information literacy, 6 = understand and implement ethical principles in a diverse world, 7 = apply psychological knowledge and skills, 8 = Demonstrate multicultural competence and awareness of issues related to equity, diversity,* and inclusion. Level of PLO achievement facilitated by this course: I = introductory, C = competency, A = advanced.

Acknowledgments and Respect for Diversity

Our classrooms view diversity of identity as a strength and resource. Your experiences and different perspectives are encouraged and add to a rich learning environment that fosters critical thought through respectful discussion and inclusion. The Department of Psychology would also like to acknowledge the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in southern Alberta. The City of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III.

Course Format

This is an in-person class held on campus.

Prerequisites

Admission to the honours program in psychology.

Required Text

There is no required textbook for this course.

Assessment Methods

Component	Proportion of Grade	Due Date
Honours project and thesis	85%	April 14, 2023
Well-being schedule	1%	September 20, 2022
Fall 3 minute thesis presentation	4%	Oct 13 – Nov 17
Questions and feedback	2%	Oct 13 – Nov 17
Well-being reflection	1%	January 31, 2023
Winter research presentation	4%	Feb 7 – Mar 28
Questions and feedback	2%	Feb 7 – Mar 28
Research poster	1%	March 28, 2023
Attendance at conference	ungraded	April 28, 2023

Honours Thesis (85% of 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 **with oversight by the honours supervisor**, but may not formally be considered 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 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 1, 2022**.

The completed honours thesis is to be submitted no later than **April 14, 2023**. 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 (in PDF format) to psycugrd@ucalgary.ca. Students should consult with their supervisors and second readers to determine whether they prefer to receive a hard or electronic copy of the thesis. Students seeking an extension of

the thesis beyond **April 14, 2023** must complete an Application for Deferral of Term Work (see the University of Calgary Calendar for regulations).

The thesis will be evaluated on the quality of the written document, calibre of the research project (e.g. originality, appropriateness of method/design, potential impact of the findings, and contribution to the discipline), and research effort (e.g. your contributions to the design/method, data collection, analysis, interpretations, skills/training acquired during the project).

Ethics certification must be in place by **February 3, 2023** 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 me (scspansw@ucalgary.ca) on or before this date to demonstrate that ethics certification has been obtained. This is required even in those cases where the student is working on previously approved research.

Well-being schedule (1% of final grade)

One of the goals of the course is to take a holistic approach to ensuring student success. The data shows that effective time management can reduce stress and anxiety as well as increasing well-being. The goal for this assignment is to create a schedule for the upcoming semester that will aid you with time management. Not only should this schedule include your academic deadlines but also time for self-care, etc. This assignment is due via Dropbox on D2L by 11:59pm on **September 20, 2022**. More details and a rubric will be available on D2L and will be discussed in class.

Fall 3-minute thesis presentation (4% of final grade)

In the fall semester (**October 13 to November 17**) students will deliver a brief, 3-minute oral PowerPoint presentation that outlines the rationale, goals, and importance of the research they will be conducting for their honours project. These presentations will be graded on the basis of delivery/communication style, engagement, and comprehensibility. More details regarding the presentations will be discussed in class and a rubric will be available on D2L.

Questions and Feedback (2% of final grade in each semester for a total of 4%)

As well as some time after each presentation for questions, students will provide written feedback on the quality of content and delivery of each of their peer's presentations. The goal is to provide students with extensive feedback such that everyone has a chance to practice and improve their presentation skills. I will collect all of the written feedback and summarize the main points for each presenter. The grade for your questions and feedback will be determined by its quality and your engagement with the material presented by your peers. More details regarding how to provide feedback and grading will be discussed in class and posted on D2L. This same process will occur for the fall and winter presentations.

Well-being reflection (1% of final grade)

The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to reflect on your fall well-being schedule. In no more than two pages (double-spaced, 12-point New Roman font) briefly discuss what worked, what didn't, and what you might change to aid in your academic success. This assignment is to be handed in via D2L by 11:59pm on January 31, 2023. Time will be devoted to discussing the assignment in class and details and a rubric will be made available on D2L.

Winter Research Presentation (4% of final grade)

In the winter semester (February 7 to March 28) students will give a 12-minute oral presentation (note that this mirrors the time constraints for the undergraduate conference) using PowerPoint. This presentation should outline the entire honours project (including results and interpretation, limitations, and ideas for future research). Each presentation will be followed by a question and answer period. As with the 3-minute thesis presentation feedback will be provided to all presenters. Details regarding the rubric, etc. will be discussed in class.

Research Poster (1% of final grade)

Each student will prepare a poster describing the results of their thesis research. The poster must be submitted electronically via Dropbox on D2L no later than 11:59 pm on **March 28, 2023**. If a student has not completed data collection and analysis by that point in time they should base the poster on whatever data have been collected to date (i.e. there must be some data analysis and results discussed even if the analyses presented do not reflect the final results to be reported in the thesis proper). Posters are to be prepared according to the guidelines presented in class on poster presentations to be scheduled in January. More details regarding the posters will be discussed in class and posted on D2L.

Without instructor approval students that fail to hand in their assignments/presentations/posters on the deadlines listed above will receive a grade of zero.

Department of Psychology Student Research Conference (ungraded)

Each student will present a paper or poster at the Student Research Conference on **April 28, 2023** (date to be confirmed). Due to program constraints the number of paper presentations will be limited. Paper presentations will be 12 minutes in length. Students giving poster presentations will be responsible for creating and printing their own posters. Although no grades are assigned for participating in the student research conference, participation is compulsory. This conference is an important milestone in students' academic careers and an excellent opportunity to share their research with a receptive audience.

University of Calgary Academic Integrity Policy

Academic integrity is the foundation of the development and acquisition of knowledge and is based on values of honesty, trust, responsibility, and respect. We expect members of our community to act with integrity.

Research integrity, ethics, and principles of conduct are key to academic integrity. Members of our campus community are required to abide by our institutional code of conduct and promote academic integrity in upholding the University of Calgary's reputation of excellence. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have read and are familiar with the student academic misconduct policy:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Student-Academic-Misconduct-Policy.pdf>

Department of Psychology Criteria for Letter Grades

Psychology course instructors 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%

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
T Jan 10	<i>First day of TR lectures</i> Re-introduction to academic life
R Jan 12	Giving a "slightly longer" presentation workshop/support
T Jan 17	Mental wellbeing workshop (Mandy McCaughley)
R Jan 19	<i>Last day to drop a class without financial penalty</i> Putting together a research poster
Jan 20	<i>Last day to add or swap a course</i>
T Jan 24	What it's like to be a counseling psychologist (Dr. Erin Zelinski)
R Jan 26	Surviving academia (Dr. Simon Spanswick)
Jan 27	<i>Fee payment deadline for Fall Term full and half courses.</i>
T Jan 31	What it's like to be a clinical psychology (Dr. Vinay Bharadia)
R Feb 2	What it's like to be a graduate student (panel discussion)
T Feb 7	Student Presentations
R Feb 9	Student Presentations
T Feb 14	Student Presentations
R Feb 16	Student Presentations
Feb 20	UNIVERSITY CLOSED Alberta Family Day
Feb 19-25	Term Break
T Feb 28	Student Presentations
R Mar 2	Student Presentations
T Mar 7	Student Presentations
R Mar 9	Student Presentations

T Mar 14	Kaffeeklatsch
R Mar 16	Student Presentations
T Mar 21	Student Presentations
R Mar 23	Student Presentations
T Mar 28	Student Presentations
R Mar 30	Student presentation flex day
T Apr 4	Writing/poster/presentation support
R Apr 6	Writing/poster/presentation support
Apr 7	UNIVERSITY CLOSED Good Friday
Apr 10	UNIVERSITY CLOSED Easter Monday
T Apr 11	NO CLASS
Apr 12	<i>Fall Term Lectures End. Last day to withdraw with permission from Fall Term half courses.</i>
Apr 15-26	<i>Final Exam Period</i>

Extra Research Participation Course Credit is Not Offered for this Course.

Absence From Test/Exam

Makeup tests/exams are **NOT** an option without the approval of the instructor

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-1-1.html> At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Once approved by the instructor a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam on a day/time scheduled by the instructor. If a student cannot write their final exam on the date assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>

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 write their final exam on the date assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam [Deferred Final Exams | University of Calgary \(ucalgary.ca\)](#) Students with an exceptional extenuating circumstance (e.g., a family emergency) should contact the Department of Psychology psyugrd@ucalgary.ca

Reappraisal of Graded Term Work <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html>

Reappraisal of Final Grade <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-3.html>

Academic Accommodations

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 [University of Calgary : B.6.1 Accommodation of Students with Disabilities or Medical Conditions \(ucalgary.ca\)](#)

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by professor(s) (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed, or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Copyright Legislation

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary

Student Support and Resources

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines>

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course with no "W" notation and **still receive a tuition fee refund** is **Thursday, January 19, 2023**. Last day add/swap a course is **Friday, January 20, 2023**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **Wednesday, April 12, 2023** [University of Calgary : Academic Schedule \(ucalgary.ca\)](http://www.ucalgary.ca)