

PSYC 395: 299

Independent Research in Psychology Research-Related Skills course

Spring 2018

Instructors: Dr. Monica M. Gaudier-Diaz Dr. Keely A. Muscatell
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Meetings: Wednesdays 2-3pm in Davie 202

Prerequisites:

- 1) PSYC 101, and at least two additional PSYC courses, one of which should be 200-level or above
- 2) Completed at least 24 credit hours of course work
- 3) Minimum overall GPA of 3.0

Course description:

This 1 credit Research-Related Skills course will strengthen the undergraduate research experience by offering students an opportunity to develop critical scientific thinking, communication, and writing skills.

Course objectives:

- 1) Discuss and present scientific findings to peers via paper discussion presentations using power point
- 2) Translate the conclusion from a research article to the general community by writing a blog post
- 3) Examine scientific literature on a selected topic to gain knowledge of what has been done in the field to then design a novel study
- 4) Write a research proposal that includes: background, methodology, anticipated results, and potential pitfalls
- 5) Share ideas with members of the Psychology and Neuroscience department via a poster presentation

Course requirements:

- 1) Two credit hour enrollment of PSYC395 with a research mentor, plus enrollment in this one credit section (299)
- 2) Attend weekly 1 hour meetings; the specific date and time will be set based on registered student's availability.
- 3) Dedicate approximately 2 hours a week preparing for class and/or working on assignments outside of meeting time
- 4) Complete all assignments: paper discussion, blog post, elevator pitch, research proposal, and scientific poster

Grading:

A, 100-90% B, 89-80% C, 79-70% D, 69-60% F, 59-0%

Assignments and grade percentages:

Assignment	Description	Grade percentage
Paper discussions	All students will read a scientific article and write a response paper. A leading team will present the findings in-class and guide discussion.	15%
Blog post	Everyone will summarize for a lay audience the results of a research article discussed in class. The blog post will be posted in the Carolina Social Neuroscience and Health Laboratory website.	15%
Research proposal	Study ideas will be presented as an “elevator pitch”, and then developed into a proposal. The final paper must include a ~2-3 page literature review, ~2 pages of proposed methods for the study, ~2 pages of anticipated results, and ~2-3 pages of conclusions, strengths, limitations and future directions.	35%
Scientific poster	Students will create a scientific poster based on their proposed research study, and present their posters in the “QEP Research and Making Expo”.	25%
In-class participation	Everyone is expected to attend weekly meetings and participate in class discussions.	10%

Course schedule and assignment due dates:

Week	In-Class Schedule
1 Jan 17	Introductions, course description, discussion of course activities, brainstorming research areas of interest.
2 Jan 24	Paper discussion lead by instructors. The paper selected will be one which news outlets have reported on, to offer guidance to the blog-post activity.
3 Jan 31	Paper discussion lead by instructors.
4 Feb 7	Paper discussion lead by instructors.
5 Feb 14	Paper discussion lead by group 1.
6 Feb 21	Paper discussion lead by group 2.
7 Feb 28	Paper discussion lead by group 3.
8 Mar 7	No class: Instructors will be out of town for a meeting. Students are highly encouraged to use the meeting time to work on the final paper.
9 Mar 14	No class: Spring break.
10 Mar 21	Students will present their “elevator pitch” and receive feedback from both classmates and instructors. This day students will turn-in copies of their blog post to another student and the instructors.

11 Mar 28	Instructors will present on how to condense a study into a poster and will lead a discussion regarding blog-posts.
12 Apr 4	Instructors will answer questions regarding the assignments, and will lecture on additional funding/research opportunities.
13 Apr 11	Students must turn in a full draft of their research proposal for peer evaluation. In class, instructors will lecture on peer review.
14 Apr 18	In class peer review activity.
15 Apr 25	Poster practice day and blog-post deadline. Posters will be presented in the "QEP Research and Making Expo" on Thursday April 26th from 3-5pm in the Great Hall.
16 May 2	Finals week: Turn in final research proposal.

Instructors reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus as the semester progresses; these will be announced in class and by email as soon as possible.