



Psychology 4950

Undergraduate Apprenticeship



Class meets 1/9, 1/16 & 4/17 at 3:30pm in HPER118

Instructor

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Course Description

Students plan and execute their apprenticeship experience in a research setting (with faculty members) and an applied setting (e.g., community service agency or school). Students are encouraged to take this course three or more semesters prior to graduation. Prerequisite: PSY 2950.

Course Objectives. There are a variety of broad objectives for this course. All course activities are designed to help students meet these objectives. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Write high-quality learning objectives; evaluate and articulate progress on learning objectives
- Demonstrate and develop competency in both written and oral communication
- Apply what they have learned in the psychology program to an apprenticeship projects in an applied setting and a research setting by making progress toward self-generated learning objectives

Communication Intensive Courses. Psychology 4950 is a Communications Intensive (CI) course and students are expected to display upper-division level communication-skills. The primary purpose of CI courses is to help students “meet communication literacy goals by achieving competency in both written and oral communication” (Utah State University General Education Advisory Committee, 2003). CI courses are designed to provide students with opportunities to enhance their written and oral communication competence in the discipline of psychology. In Psychology 4950, these objectives will be met via the apprenticeship projects as well as course assignments. Students should attend to their professional communication skills as students will be evaluated in terms of their competency and progress in both written and oral communication.

BlackBoard. This course will make use of BlackBoard (bb.usu.edu). All students who are registered for the course, will be able to access course-resources on BlackBoard.

Course Activities & Grading

Grading. Grades will be assigned as follows: A: 930-1,000, A-: 900-929, B+: 870-899, B: 830-869, B-: 800-829, C+: 770-799, C: 730-769, C-: 700-729, D+: 670-699, D: 600-669, F: 0-599.

Projects. Students are required to identify and work on two apprenticeship projects— one in an applied setting and one in a research setting. A total time commitment of 120 hours, 60 hours for each project, is required. Examples of applied settings include: hospitals, a human-resources department at a local employer, a human-services related non-profit organization, etc. Generally, research projects will be housed within an academic unit of the university. Instructor approval of students’ project proposals is required *before* hours can be accumulated:

- A. **Proposal:** Projects must be approved *before* hours are accumulated. Learning Project Proposal Forms are available via BlackBoard and must be submitted via BlackBoard. 1/30/09 Project Proposal Forms require: supervisor information; a brief description of activities that may take place during the project period, and; a set of 4 to 8 learning objectives specific to the project.

- B. Supervisors' Evaluation & Verification of Hours: Once hours have been accumulated for each project, students are required to ask that their supervisor complete the *Supervisor's Evaluation & Verification of Hours Form*. This form summarizes the quality and quantity of their efforts: supervisors are asked to verify that student reported hours are accurate, and to evaluate student's performance. Supervisor ratings may impact student overall grade positively or negatively if the student's grade is 'borderline' (within 1% of the next higher, or lower, grade). The form is available via BlackBoard; a hard-copy must be submitted as the form requires a supervisor's signature. The form is due by 5/1/09.
1. Hours/Points Ladder. The accumulation of hours will be evaluated for each project (research and applied) as follows: 60 or more hours = 400 points; 50 to 59 hours = 350 points; 40 to 49 hours = 300 points; 30 to 39 hours = 250 points, and; less than 30 hours = 0 points.
 2. Important notes regarding hour-accumulation follow:
 - a) Students can attend a psychology (or related) professional conference and count up to 20 hours toward their research-hour requirement (this must be approved by the instructor). Good options this term include:
 - (1) Rocky Mountain Psychological Association (www.rockymountainpsych.org), which is holding its annual conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico April 16-18, 2009.
 - (2) The Western Psychological Association (www.westernpsych.org), which is holding its annual conference in Portland, OR, from April 23-26, 2009.
 - b) There is a Term Paper option (see below) for students who are interested in (a) volunteering for fewer hours and (b) receiving feedback on writing skills. If the term paper option is chosen, it will count for up to 200 points toward one or both projects (this is the equivalent of 30 hours).
 - c) Some hours from *one* project can count toward the other project. One "step" up the hours/points ladder can be taken by applying excess accumulated hours from one project toward the other project. For example, if a student accumulates 42 hours in applied, and 83 in research, then 8 hours from the research project can be applied to the applied project to bring the total hours to 50 (thus moving from 200 points to 250 points).
- C. Capstone Report: A capstone report is to be completed after hours are completed in both projects. The report should be a minimum of 1,500 words and will be evaluated for style (i.e., quality of writing) and content (i.e., insight). The capstone report is worth up to 100 points, and is to be submitted via BlackBoard by 5/1; late assignments will not be accepted. The capstone report should include:
1. An assessment of progress toward learning objectives;
 2. An assessment of any learning that occurred 'outside' of the proposed learning objectives;
 3. An evaluation of apprenticeship experiences as confirming or contrasting expectations, material from coursework, and/or the term paper assignment, and;
 4. A description of how the overall apprenticeship experience (the projects, assignments, and (optional) term paper) impacted (or didn't impact) the student's perspective on the field and their career goals.

Contact. At least one individual student/instructor meeting is required, as are two e-updates.

- A. *Planning Meeting (March)*. An student/instructor meeting is required and more are recommended. This meeting must occur before March 20th. It is the responsibility of each student to schedule the meeting. This meeting will serve multiple purposes. First, progress on the projects will be assessed. Finally, for those students who are planning on completing the optional term paper (see below), this meeting should occur after a rough draft is submitted for grading. In that case, feedback will be provided.
- B. *Email-Updates (February, April)*. Two email updates are required and more are encouraged.

1. The first e-update must occur in the first two weeks of February and should include a detailed update of progress, changes, challenges and experiences.
2. The second e-update must occur in the first two weeks in April and should include an update of progress on the term paper (where applicable), the projects and an overall assessment of “trajectory” (i.e., are students expecting to complete hours, term papers, etc).

Term Paper (Optional). Students may choose to complete a term paper on a topic of their choice related to one (or both) of their apprenticeship projects; the paper should generally adhere to APA (5th ed.) style. The term paper is a 4,000 word (slightly more than 12 pages) literature review that includes a minimum of 15 relevant sources from the research literature. Topics must be approved by the instructor (by 2/1). A draft, such that detailed feedback can be provided, is required. The draft of the term paper is due on, or preferably before, 3/3. The draft is worth 50 points and evaluated in terms of overall progress. The final draft of the term papers will be worth up to 100 points and will be evaluated in terms of style and content. The final paper is due 5/1.

Policy on Incompletes. According to University policy, incompletes are to be awarded only under “extenuating circumstances.” These are defined as: “(1) incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes for a minimum period of two weeks, (2) a death in the immediate family, (3) financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter course schedule to secure employment, (4) change in work schedule as required by employer, or (5) other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor...documentation of the circumstances cited to justify an incomplete grade is required” (Catalog, p. 19). The inability to secure hours is not a valid reason to obtain an incomplete. Non-completion of hours will be taken account via the grading process.

Assignments, due dates, and possible points are summarized and outlined below:

Assignments	Due Date	Points
Contact		
February Email Update	2/15/09	20
March Student/Instructor Meeting	3/20/09	20
April Email Update	4/15/09	20
Projects		
Applied Project Proposal	1/30/09	20
Research Project Proposal	1/30/09	20
Applied Project Eval. & Verification of Hours	5/1/09	400
Research Project Eval. & Verification of Hours	5/1/09	400
Capstone Report	5/1/09	100
Term Paper (Optional)		
Topic Approval	2/1/09	
Draft	3/1/09	
Final Draft	5/1/09	