RESEARCH PRACTICUM IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
PSY 4100 FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
PSY6030/7030 FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a hands-on experiential learning course. Students will be directly involved with various stages of the research process in a social psychology laboratory. The course will also include class meetings, involving group discussions and graduate student presentations. The goal of this course is to train undergraduate and graduate students in the research methodologies used in social psychology. We will focus on laboratory-based experiments. We will also discuss key theoretical and statistical issues in social and health psychology.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Be able to develop your own research ideas
- Be able to incorporate social psychological theory into your research
- Be able to design an experiment that tests your hypothesis
- Be able to conduct experimental research sessions
- Be able to code and enter research data into SPSS
- Be able to interpret the results of studies and plan follow-up research

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A PRACTICUM STUDENT

Throughout the semester you will take on a number of important duties as a student in this course, although the specific duties may vary across undergraduate and graduate students. In general, you can expect to contribute 3 hours per week for every 1 credit hour you are registered for. Your schedule should be open and flexible enough to accommodate your commitment to this research practicum experience. Students with tight schedules or who cannot attend our weekly meetings should NOT register for this course.

It is expected that you…

- Attend weekly class meetings. We will hold weekly meetings throughout the semester. During these meetings you will be introduced to new research ideas, methodologies, statistics, etc. Moreover, you will be expected to update the lab group on the progress of your ongoing project and you will be able to contribute to group discussions. Issues relevant to the careers of both undergraduate students (e.g., graduate school preparation) and graduate students (e.g., professional development) will be discussed, as well as topics covering the technological and methodological demands of the field. It is expected that lab members attend EVERY meeting.
- Attend experimental sessions. It is critical that students attend their posted experimental sessions and hours. If you do need to miss or arrive late for an experimental session, we ask that you e-mail the

graduate student trainer ASAP. Similarly, if you are unable to make it into the lab due to illness or an emergency, please notify us before the study session/meeting is scheduled to begin. Lab hours that are missed due to an absence are expected to be made up.

- Help design/implement studies. Every study starts with an idea, but it must eventually be polished into a workable study. Students will contribute to this process by doing pilot testing, developing stimuli, creating IRB protocols, designing surveys, creating Medialab programs, and so on (note that the specific task will depend upon the nature of the project and a student's role in the project)
- Enter/code data. An important step in the research process is correctly entering and coding data. Basically, research participants will provide us with their thoughts, feelings, and behavior. Afterwards, we need to translate this information into numbers for data analysis. Thus, data entry/coding helps us make the transition from a heap of raw data collected in our research rooms to the condensed findings that we report to other researchers at conferences and in research articles. This step requires great care, vigilance, and training. This is the "not-so-glamorous" step in the research process—but—it is also one of the most critical. At some point in the semester, everyone in the lab (including Dr. Geers) will be involved in the data entry and coding process.
- Collaborate with others. One nice aspect of being in a research lab is that it offers an opportunity to connect with like-minded others in Psychology (others who are interested in graduate school, research, etc.). This interaction occurs in lab meetings, during data coding, and at other times throughout the semester.
- Collect data. Data collection is a vital responsibility of every student in the course (undergraduate and graduate) and significant time will be spent on research ethics, experiment training, and correct experimental protocols. If data is not collected correctly, the research project dies there. It is important to remember that the success or failure of our research projects will have a significant impact on the professional lives for all people in the lab (faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students). As such, we rely heavily on you in the data collection stage of the research process and we always appreciate your efforts. Data collection can involve:
    - Being an experimenter (in charge of a research session involving participants)
    - Playing the role of a confederate (someone who pretends to be another participants)

  As an experimenter (or confederate), it is imperative that your study be ready to go when participants arrive. To ensure that everything is set up *before* the study start time, please arrive early so that you have time to set up the study and prepare the necessary materials. Also, when running studies, keep an eye out for problems and be pro-active in finding solutions. Finally, experimenters are expected to dress professionally when running participants.

COURSE GRADING

It is absolutely critical that you are **reliable, responsible, and productive in your lab tasks and with your contributions to the research**. This is essential as it will yield the best data possible—thus providing us with an opportunity to advance the science of psychology. On a more pragmatic side, these factors will also be a big determinant of your course grade. The primary criteria for your final grade in this course will be your consistent performance throughout the semester—including your meeting and experiment attendance. As a general rule, unexcused attendance in the lab (e.g., no call/no show and excessive absences) will result in a loss of 2 percentage points to your overall course grade each time they occur. Partial attendance of meetings or experimental sessions (e.g. arriving 15 minutes late) will result in a loss of 1 percentage point. Poor lab performance (e.g., not following experimental procedures correctly, not allocating research credit to participants in a timely manner, errors in data entry) will also result in a loss of points; so will unprofessional dress and behavior. Typically, such infractions will result in a loss of 1 percentage point. I should also note that, although the course is largely experiential in nature, you will not be allowed to "idle" through this course and be comfortable with an average grade. As mentioned above, reliability and productivity will be the primary criteria for your grade, and lapses in either are not acceptable. As I expect you all to be the top

performers at UT, I start out with the assumption that all students will receive an A in this course. Poor performance will result in grade reductions as explained above. If you have any questions about your grade at any time during the semester, please come talk to me.

If students do not follow the procedures laid out in the syllabus they may be asked to drop the course. When students are not following the syllabus, the instructor may also remove the student from the course (resulting in an IW) or assign the student the grade of "F". Students will be given written and oral warnings before being given a forced withdrawal from the course.

GRADING

93 - 100 A	80 - 82 B-	67 - 69 D+
90 - 92 A-	77 - 79 C+	63 - 66 D
87 - 89 B+	73 - 76 C	60 - 62 D-
83 - 86 B	70 - 72 C-	less than 60 F

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS

Jan 13: Introductions/review syllabus
Jan 20: *No lab meeting: SPSP week*
Jan 27: Joint lab introduction and article discussion day #1
Feb 3: Research presentation and discussion
Feb 10: SPSS training/worksheet day
Feb 17: Research presentations and discussions
Feb 24: Research "in a hat" day
March 3: Split lab meeting day
March 10: *No lab meeting: spring break*
March 17: Research Presentation and discussion
March 24: Graduate school Day 1: with panel discussion
March 31: Graduate school Day 2: personal statement/CV workshop
April 7: Article discussion day #2
April 14: Review of the cold pressor paradigm and research presentation
April 21: Research presentations and discussions
April 28: End of the semester pizza day

*Please note that the schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances and when the instructor needs to do so.

We will adhere to the following Collegiate Policies set out by the University of Toledo

Academic integrity: http://www.utoledo.edu/dl/students/dishonesty.html

Student accommodations: http://www.utoledo.edu/utlc/accessibility/