

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

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or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

In this course, undergraduate and graduate students will work in a research lab. Students will be directly involved with various stages of the research process in social psychology. You will learn answers to questions such as:

- How do we develop new research ideas?
- How do we incorporate social psychological theory into our research ideas?
- How do we design an efficient experiment that stringently tests our hypotheses?
- How do we know what to do after our study is completed?
- How do we 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 practicum student, 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.

It is expected that you...

- Attend weekly lab meetings. There will be weekly lab meetings throughout the semester. During these meetings you will be introduced to new research ideas and be expected to update the lab on the progress of your ongoing project. 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.
- 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 the entering and coding of 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 help 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 and vigilance. 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. Rose) will be involved in data entry and data coding.
- 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 practicum students (undergraduate and graduate). 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, undergrads). 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 subjects)
 - Playing the role of a confederate (someone who pretends to be another subject)

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 your contribution to the lab is **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 lab meeting and experiment attendance. I should also note that this is not a typical course and therefore does not follow a typical grading scheme. 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 significant grade reductions. If you have any questions about your grade at any time during the semester, please come talk to me.

SCHEDULE OF PRACTICUM MEETINGS

Date	Topic
8/23	Organizational Meeting
8/30	Training
9/6	Lab Presentation
9/13	Lab Presentation
9/20	Careers in Psychology/Life of an Academic
9/27	Graduate School Day 1
10/4	Graduate School Day 2
10/11	Lab presentation
10/18	Lab Presentation
10/25	Lab Presentation
11/1	The Research Process (Life of an Idea)
11/8	Lab Presentation
11/15	Lab presentation
11/22	Lab presentation
11/29	<i>No meeting (Thanksgiving Break)</i>
12/6	Celebratory Lunch!