

**Psych 4500: Research Methods in Developmental Psychology- WAC**  
**The University of Toledo**  
**Fridays 11:00AM-12:00PM**  
**University Hall 1840**

**Instructor**

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**Graduate Students**

Christina Perez, M.A. (christina.perez@utoledo.edu; UH1900B)

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**Credit Hours: 4 credits**

**Catalog/Course Description**

A hybrid course developed to provide students both classroom and laboratory experiences to provide training in designing and conducting research in forensic developmental psychology; includes work on research projects. The course is also writing intensive- weekly writing assignments and a final course project will help develop students' writing skills.

**Prerequisites**

Students are expected to have previously taken Research Methods (PSY3110) with a minimum grade of a C-.

**University Policies**

**Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination on the basis of Disability (ADA)**

The University is an equal opportunity educational institution. **Please read [The University's Policy Statement on Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability Americans with Disability Act Compliance](#).**

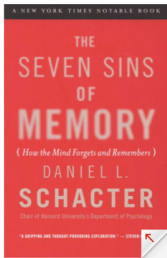
**Academic Accommodations**

The University of Toledo is committed to providing equal opportunity and access to the educational experience through the provision of reasonable accommodations. For students who have an accommodations memo from Student Disability Services, it is essential that you correspond with me as soon as possible to discuss your disability-related accommodation needs for this course. For students not registered with Student Disability Services who would like information regarding eligibility for academic accommodations due to barriers associated with a potential disability, please contact the [Student Disability Services Office](#).)

## Student Learning Outcomes

- Be trained and certified in ethical psychological research practices
- Discuss and articulate basic principles of scientific research, measurement, and experimental design
- Discuss and articulate both historical and contemporary ethical issues associated with research involving the development of autobiographical memory
- Understand the special methodological challenges of forensic developmental research
- Communicate and work with young children as research participants
- Use library and other resources to conduct a scientific literature review
- Assist to design and conduct a research project with young children
- Communicate research findings effectively, both orally and in writing
- Evaluate others' research critically and constructively
- Be able to code and enter research data into SPSS

## Readings & Material



**Required material: Schacter, D.K. (2001). *The seven sins of memory: How the mind forgets and remembers*. Boston, MA: Houghton, Mifflin and Company. ISBN: 0-618-04019-6**

***You should have read the article(s)/book chapter(s) before coming to each lab meeting.*** Please bring any questions and/or comments you may have about the readings to our lab meetings to contribute to the lab discussion. Contributing to the lab discussion is expected.

Many graduate school courses are structured in this manner (i.e., a discussion-based seminar). If you plan to go on to graduate school it would be helpful for you to get practice with this type of class while you can!

## Responsibilities

1. Attend and participate in weekly class meetings
  - We will hold weekly meetings throughout the semester. During these meetings, students will be introduced to new research ideas, methodologies, statistics, etc. Moreover, students will be expected to update the group on the progress of ongoing efforts for experiential learning tasks (see below). Issues relevant to the careers of undergraduate students (e.g., graduate school preparation), as well as topics covering the technological and methodological demands of the field will also be covered. **It is expected that students attend EVERY meeting and contribute to discussion.** If a student must miss a meeting due to illness or some other university-appropriate excuse, please let the instructor know in advance of the missed class..

## 2. Write weekly reflection papers

- Students will write a reflection paper for each week's readings. These papers will be 1 page (double spaced). In your reflection papers, students will briefly summarize the topic of the meeting (1 paragraph) and provide thoughtful questions that you would want to ask about the topic (1 paragraph). Students will hand in these readings each week at the start of class. Students will hand in 7 reflection papers during the semester and can choose which weeks they want to submit these.

## 3. Writing project

This course is a writing intensive course and is part of our Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program at UT. All students will complete a written project on a topic that is relevant to forensic developmental psychology. Unless otherwise specified, the final paper should be 6 to 8 double spaced pages (not including the title page, abstract, and references) in APA format. We will provide feedback and give you the opportunity to improve your writing throughout the various deadlines. There will be 3 interim deadlines for aspects of the Final Paper where you will receive feedback: (1) topic selection paragraph (due Week 3), (2) literature review (due Week 7), (3) annotated outline (due Week 9). You will submit a rough draft and both receive and provide feedback to classmates (Week 13). You will have the opportunity to revise the final project based on peer feedback. More details will be provided in class and on Blackboard. Students will be present their projects during a lab meeting at the end of the semester. **The final paper should be emailed to the instructor by 11:55pm on Friday of the last week of classes.**

## 4. Complete laboratory tasks

- As part of the experiential learning component of the course, students will be assigned to various research-related tasks involving experiments in forensic developmental psychology. To facilitate this, students will be assigned times during the semester where they will complete these tasks. Students who sign up for 4 credit hours will complete 6 hours of experiential learning tasks per week, and students who sign up for 3 credit hours will complete 4 hours per week. These tasks will include some combination of the following:
  - Data Collection. Data collection is a vital responsibility of every student in the course 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 psychological 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 students in the data collection stage of the research process and we always appreciate their efforts. Data collection can involve:

- As an experimenter (or confederate), it is imperative that the 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 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 appropriately when running participants.
- 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, 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 behaviors. 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, all students will be involved in the data entry and coding process.

**Grading:**

Your grade will be based on meeting attendance and participation, weekly reaction papers, a written project & presentation, and completion of laboratory tasks. The following is outline of the grading system.

- A:** Exceeds expectations (90% - 100%)
- B:** Meets expectations (80% - 89%)
- C:** Struggles to meet expectations (70% - 79%)
- D:** Rarely meets expectations (60% - 69%)
- F:** Fails to meet expectation (less than 60%)

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>
Attendance and Participation in Meetings	130 points
Weekly Reflection Papers (10 points each)	70 points
Writing Project and presentation	100 points
Laboratory Tasks	200 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>500 points</b>

**Scheduling**

We will meet as a class on Fridays at 11 a.m. in UH1840. Students will also have individual schedules at times throughout the week when they will complete experiential learning tasks in a laboratory setting. Everyone's schedule is taken into account when assigning weekly tasks and lab hours. If you are scheduled for hours, we expect that you will be available and at the testing

site/lab during your assigned hours. You will need to provide your weekly schedule (if it will change from week-to-week) to your supervisor with no less than one week's notice. Any failure to meet these exceptions will result in a reduced grade or withdrawal from the course.

### **No Show Policy**

***It is very important to show up for your scheduled hours. If for some reason you are unable to make your hours, you must call ahead and let us know that you will be absent.*** The instructors will use their discretion to determine if an absence is excusable.

For the first unexcused absence, there will be a half letter grade reduction to your final grade. However, you can make up your missed hours to avoid a reduction in your final grade for your first no show. Subsequent no shows will result in a full letter grade reduction and there will not be an opportunity to make up these hours.

*1<sup>st</sup> no show = half a letter grade reduction with the ability to make up hours to avoid a grade reduction*

*2<sup>nd</sup> no show = full letter grade reduction*

*3<sup>rd</sup> no show = full letter grade reduction and you will be asked to withdrawal from the course or receive an F*

### **Communication**

Effective communication with instructors and other research assistants is essential to ensure the lab runs smoothly. As communication is key to running an effective research lab, ineffective communication with the instructors and/or other research assistants will result in a reduced letter grade. Most communication will occur in the form of emails sent to your UToledo rocket email address. You are required to thoroughly read your emails and confirm that you read the information by replying to the instructor that you received and understand the information in the email. ***You must check your email daily (Monday-Friday) and are expected to reply to an email from the instructor within 24 hours.*** Failure to communicate effectively will lead to a grade reduction.

## Tentative Course Schedule

Week	Assignment:	Readings
1 1/24	Orientation, Ethics, and CITI Training	
2 1/31	Introduction to Forensic Developmental Psychology	Schacter (2001) Intro
3 2/7	Introduction to Autobiographical Memory	Belli & Loftus (1996)
4 2/14	Transience	Schacter (2001) Ch 1
5 2/21	Absent-Mindedness	Schacter (2001) Ch 2
6 2/28	Blocking	Schacter (2001) Ch 3
7 3/6	No class- American Psych-Law Meeting	
8 3/13	Spring Break – No Class	
9 3/20	Misattribution	Schacter (2001) Ch 4
10 3/27	Suggestibility	Schacter (2001) Ch 5
11 4/3	Bias	Schacter (2001) Ch 6
12 4/10	Persistence	Schacter (2001) Ch 7
13 4/17	7 sins: Vices or Virtues	Schacter (2001) Ch 8
14 4/24	Student Presentations	
15 5/1	Student Presentations	

Final papers due by 11:55pm on Friday of last week of classes