

To: HUHC
From: S. Stavros Valenti, Psychology Department
RE: Individually Negotiated Honors Option Proposal: PSY 196 (Spring, 2008)
Date: December 3, 2007

Goals and Rationale of the course

The purpose of this INHO is to extend the student's understanding of research in developmental psychology. This INHO is based on a research seminar with three components: (a) participation in a series of seminar discussions on readings in a focused area of human development; (b) writing a literature review, and (c) conducting an original empirical research project as part of a team. The INHO experiences are designed to deepen the student's understanding of the relation between theory and data in developmental psychology, and promote the development of additional data analysis skills.

Additional INHO assignments

In addition to these regular assignments, students registering for INHO credit will have the following enrichment experiences:

- (a) The literature review will have the additional requirement of a broad, historical overview of the topic (e.g., the study of psychosocial development in college-aged persons).
- (b) A follow-up study with specific, quantitative predictions must be proposed as an additional requirement for the literature review.
- (c) As a follow-up exercise for the literature review, the instructor will generate a data set and give it to the student, who will then analyze "mock data" and write a discussion section based on the results of this simulated research study.
- (d) As an enhancement of the team empirical research project, the student will learn and will conduct an additional statistical analysis of the data (e.g., multiple regression), and will report on this analysis as part of his or her final research manuscript.

• Additional Readings:

- These will depend on the literature review topic selected by the student, and on the statistical analysis deemed most appropriate for the data analysis exercises.

• Writing:

- Both of writing assignments (literature review and proposal; empirical project) will be longer (by about 50%, I imagine) to accommodate the additional reading and data analyses.

• Attendance: In addition to regular class attendance, INHO students will meet with me an additional number of sessions during the semester (about 5 times, or as needed) to discuss the extra reading and writing assignments.

Following this page you will find a sample syllabus for this course.

Research Seminar in Developmental Psychology

[sample syllabus] Fall 2007: PSY-196-01

MW 12:50 – 3:50 Library 231

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DESCRIPTION: The purpose of this course is to provide you with an in-depth research experience in Developmental Psychology. All work in this course is designed to develop your skill at planning, designing, conducting, and evaluating research in developmental psychology. The focus of this year's seminar will be "the transition to college." We'll look at the psychology research literature on adjustment to college, and we will develop our own research studies on the factors that help explain successful adjustment during this important and critical time of change and psychological growth.

LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

(1) Students in developmental courses will develop critical thinking skills necessary to interpret research findings in the area of human development.

Specific Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate developmental research designs as applied to theories and findings;
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of various components of research including hypothesis, research questions, various research designs, findings, and alternative interpretations of the results;
- Students will be able to communicate their research to others in the mode of writing, oral presentation, and group discussion.

(2) Learning Goal: Students will understand how research methods are used to test alternative explanations of human thought and behavior in a variety of problem domains, both basic (theoretical) and applied (practical).

Specific Objectives:

- Students will understand basic experimental, quasi-experimental, and correlational research designs;
- Students will understand the fundamental concepts in research design and analyses, including experimental control of variables, confounds, reliability, and validity;
- Students will know how to read (and in some instances, write) empirical research reports in APA (American Psychological Association) style.

(3) Learning Goal: Students in research methods courses will demonstrate a basic understanding of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Specific Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify basic descriptive statistics, such as assorted test of central tendency (e.g., mean, median, mode), variability (e.g., standard deviation, variance, range), and association (correlation); understand how they assess patterns in measurements and among variables; interpret these tests when encountered in the research literature; and in some instances calculate these tests from formulas or statistical software packages such as SPSS or SAS;
- Students will be able to identify basic inferential statistics, such as the t-test and the F-test, and understand how they assess reliability of results; interpret these tests when encountered in the research literature; and in some instances calculate these tests from formulas or statistical software packages such as SPSS or SAS.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites: You should have already completed both Psychological Statistics (PSY-40) and Research Methods (PSY-141), as well as course in child and/or adolescent psychology. (i.e., PSY-53 and/or PSY-54) with a grade of C- or better.

Requirements: There are several areas in which you are evaluated:

- The group research project (30%)
- The individual literature review (30%)
- The seminar readings, discussion, quizzes, and attendance (40%)

In addition, all students are expected to take the “Major Field Test” in class. This is a test of your knowledge of theories, research findings, and methods in psychological science. Your score on this test will not affect your grade, but you are required to take this test as part of the psychology department’s ‘outcomes assessment’. Your score on this test will provide you with feedback on your competence in psychology relative to a national sample of students. You will not receive credit for this course if you do not take the Major Field Test.

READINGS

You are required to purchase two books, obtain some readings from e-reserves, and also to obtain articles on your own for your literature review.

To Purchase:

Light, R. J. (2001). *Making the most of college*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Nathan, R. (2005). *My freshman year: What a professor learned by becoming a student*. New York: Penguin Books.

Required Reference:

American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Fifth Edition).

Additional Readings

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). *How college affects students: Volume 2: A third decade of research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. [Selected Chapters will be made available to you during the semester]

(Other readings will be placed on e-reserve with advance notice)

THE GROUP RESEARCH REPORT

As part of a research team, students will design and execute an original research project related to this seminar on “development and adjustment in college.” You and your team members will collect and read at least 10 primary sources and 2 secondary sources related to your topic, write summaries of these sources and share your summaries with your team members, develop a research

hypothesis, collect data to test your hypothesis, analyze the data, and present your findings to the entire class.

You have several graded writing assignments related to this project:

- Each student will write, INDIVIDUALLY, a summary of two relevant primary sources (2 pages each)
- Each student will write, INDIVIDUALLY, an APA-style research report (15 or more pages)
- Students will collaborate on a “Poster” to be presented on the final day of class.

• Please note: The summaries should be original, concise reviews of the articles, and should not be directly copied, cut-and-pasted material. Paraphrase. Don’t use direct quotations for the summaries or for the APA-style research report (everyone needs practice with using their own “voice”). Please consult the University policy on Academic Honesty.

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

To help you develop an in-depth knowledge of a specific topic related to adjustment and development in college, you will also write, **individually**, a brief literature review. The purpose is to demonstrate your ability to understand, organize, integrate, and critique a substantial body of research. Your research proposal will be written in two parts: (a) a review of the literature (i.e., the introduction section of an APA paper); (b) a proposed study (i.e., the method section of an APA paper). Your manuscript should review, at a minimum, 5 primary sources and 2 secondary sources. Your paper will be 7 or more pages.

The literature review is to be written independently by each student. Please consult the University policy on plagiarism. Confirmed cases of plagiarism will result in failure in this course, and could lead to suspension from the university.

THE SEMINAR DISCUSSIONS

Each week—typically on Wednesdays--we will read and discuss the two books and other materials in our exploration of development and adjustment in college. Most weeks there will be a brief quiz at the start of class. **Be prepared for a quiz at the beginning of any class period. Quizzes cannot be made up.**

6% of your course grade is based on attendance. You may miss 1 class without your grade being affected. Beyond that, you lose 1.5 points (out of the available 6) for each absence. In exceptional circumstances some absences may be excused. *Excused absences require documentation, and only dates covered by the documentation will be excused.* It is the student’s responsibility to provide the professor with a copy of all documentation for his records. Acceptable documentation: doctor’s note, police accident report; sports/extra curricular college activity organization letter.

Students who miss 6 or more classes, whether excused or unexcused, will not receive a passing grade for the class. Three lates count as 1 absence. If you are late to class, it is your responsibility to make sure that your professor has recorded your presence.

TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

Wee	Dates	Research Teams (Monday)	Seminar (Wednesday)

k			
1	S 5	INTRODUCTION	INTRODUCTION In Class Assignment: Library research
2	S 10, 4 2	DEVELOPING A RESEARCH STRATEGY: 1. *Due: Summary 1 Seminar will be held on Monday 9/10 TOPIC 1: Adjustment to college Readings: Nathan (1-3) <i>[INHO Meeting 1: Discuss historical overview of topic]</i>	No class on September 12 – “All university classes will follow a Friday schedule.”
3	S 17,19	DEVELOPING A RESEARCH STRATEGY: 2. *Due: Summary 2	Readings: Nathan (4-end)
4	S 24,26	GENERATING A RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS 1. <i>[INHO Meeting 2: First Literature Review Outline due]</i>	TOPIC 2: Making the most of college Readings: Light (1-4)
5	O 1,3	GENERATING A RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS 2.	Readings: Light (5-8)
6	O 8,10	GENERATING A RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS 3 *Due: Presentation of Team Research Proposal: Introduction and Method (Oct. 8) <i>[INHO Meeting 3: Second Literature</i>	Readings: Light (9).

		<i>Review Outline due]</i>	
7	O 15,17	QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION 1	"MAJOR FIELDS TEST: Oct 17, in class. This exam is not graded, but you must be present for the exam in order to receive course credit. In addition, I will add 1 extra credit point for taking the test, and a second extra credit point to anyone who scores overall at or above the 25 th percentile relative to the national norms. The major fields test is like the GRE Psychology exam, only easier.
8	O 22,24	QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION 2 *First Literature Review Outline Due <i>[INHO: Literature Review Draft due]</i>	Questionnaire Construction (Readings TBA: The specific readings depend on the research topics selected by students)
9	O 29,31	DATA COLLECTION 3. <i>[INHO Meeting 4: Mock Data Set Assigned and Discussed]</i>	Questionnaire Construction (Readings TBA)
10	N 5, 7	DATA COLLECTION 1	Data analysis (Readings TBA)
11	N 12, 14	DATA COLLECTION 2	Data analysis (Readings TBA)
12	N 19, 24	DATA ANALYSIS 1 * Due: Literature Review (Nov 19) <i>[INHO: Extended Literature Review and Mock Data Analysis Due]</i>	< no class >
13	N 26,28	DATA COLLECTION 3.	Reading: Bordens & Abbot (1999).

		<i>[INHO Meeting 5: Additional Data Analysis for Team Project Discussed]</i>	(Chapter 13 only)
14	D 3,5	POSTER CONSTRUCTION 1	Work on Team Research report
15:	D 10, 42	POSTER CONSTRUCTION 2	n/a
	D 14	* Due: Research report on Friday December 14, at the start of class <i>[INHO: Research Report with Additional Data Analysis Due]</i>	POSTER PRESENTATION on Friday December 14, 10:30am – 12:30pm

SUMMARIES OF PRIMARY LITERATURE: GUIDELINES

Write-up of summaries

You are asked submit to **Turnitin** 2 summaries of articles in the primary literature. The due dates are listed on the course outline. Late submissions will not be accepted. Prepare two typewritten pages (12 point Times Font, 1-inch margins) for each article containing the following information:

- (1) The complete **reference** (APA style) for the article
- (2) A few sentences (2-3) **describing the topic** investigated. Use your own words¹
- (3) A list of 2 - 5 "**key words**" that indicate the relationship of the article to important issues, theories, or research areas.
- (4) A paragraph summarizing the ideas that **motivated** the research. Use your own words.
- (5) A paragraph or two summarizing the **method** used to address the primary research question. Use your own words.
- (6) A paragraph or two describing what **findings** are important for your research, and why they are important.
- (7) Any additional **discussion by you** that is important and relevant to your research

Do not copy or rearrange sentences from the abstract or from the article. Try to describe the topic, methods, results, etc. as best you can with little or no jargon. Please take note of the University's policy on plagiarism.

Reading Primary Literature in Psychology

Here are some guiding questions that I hope will help you in reading, summarizing, and discussing research literature in class and also in preparing your literature review and research reports.

/ Place the article in the context of what you already know

/ Quickly scan: the abstract, introduction, conclusions

/ Ask yourself

// What kind of article is this?

- Theoretical?
- Literature Review?

- A critique of some sort (of ideas or of methods)?
- An effort to "sell" an idea?
- Any combination of the above?

// What perspective does the author appear to take?

- Is s/he a partisan in some debate?
- Does she view her ideas as new? or as an application of earlier work?
- Does she claim to be testing someone's ideas?

// If it is an effort to explain some real world phenomenon

- What is the phenomenon?
- What other ideas or results are relevant?
- What other literature is relevant?
- Does the design really get at the real world phenomenon?

// Is the article relevant to a theory?

- Does it test a theory?
- Does it try to apply the theory to a new case or to the real world?
- What do you know about this theory?
- Does the author provide a context for thinking about the theory?

/ Now, read the introduction and, before continuing, get clear about the following (e.g., write 'em down!)

// The issues

- What does the author say the issues are?
- Does this jibe with what you know about the area?
- Why are these issues important?

// Make a Judgment

- Does the theoretical analysis make sense to you?
- Do the author's claims make sense to you?

// Find the Predictions

- What experimental conditions are proposed?
- How do these relate to the author's analysis?
- What are the predictions that the author makes?

// Think of any alternative predictions, especially ones that fit the conceptual context you have supplied above.

// Prepare in written form any alternative predictions, interpretations, or even conditions that you can think of.

/ Finally, read the rest of the article carefully

// Design

- What is the overall design (between? within? How many levels?)
- What are the experimental conditions?

// Think some more

- Do you believe the author? If not, why not? If so, what would make you change your mind? (New results? Of what sort?)
- Can you justify the methodology and logic of this paper in detail?
- Can you relate this article to others you have read? Empirically? Conceptually?
- Can you fit these ideas in with your common sense picture of the world?

· Did this article stimulate any interesting thoughts you might like to share?

(* I thank Ed Reed for these suggestions for students on reading primary literature)