Specialized Honours Thesis seminar course

Course: HH/PSYC 4001 6.0  
Term: F/W 2011/2012

Course Webpage: https://moodle11.yorku.ca/moodle/  
An additional website resources is at  
http://www.yorku.ca/health/psyc/PsychologyHonoursstudent.html

Prerequisite: Completed at least 84 credits towards your degree. Successfully completed PSYC 1010 6.0 (Introductory Psychology) with a grade of C, PSYC 2020 (Statistical Methods I and II, or equivalent), PSYC 2030 (Introduction to Research Methods), PSYC 3010 (Intermediate Research Methods) and highly recommended you have taken PSYC 3031 (Intermediate Statistics Laboratory).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Course Director</th>
<th>Course Director</th>
<th>Secretary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Dr. Susan Murtha</td>
<td>Dr. John Eastwood</td>
<td>Judith Manners</td>
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<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:smurtha@yorku.ca">smurtha@yorku.ca</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Voicemail:</td>
<td>x66132</td>
<td>x20684</td>
<td>X66115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office:</td>
<td>Rm 217 BSB</td>
<td>Rm 118 BSB</td>
<td>Rm 280 BSB</td>
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Time and Location
Seminar: Monday 8:30-11:30  
Rm 203 BSB

Expanded Course Description
Each student will carry out an individual piece of psychological research in consultation with a thesis supervisor and write a thesis. In addition, students will attend a seminar. The purpose of this seminar course is to provide extra resources and guidance during the process of completing an honours thesis. For example, you will have a chance to practice presenting your ideas to others and learn how to do so in an effective manner. Perhaps most importantly we seek to create a community where you can learn from others and become socialized to what it means to be a grad student in psychology. The requirements of this seminar course are relatively minor; however, the opportunities for individualized learning are great. To some degree it is up to you to make use of this seminar to its fullest potential. Please ask questions, make suggestions/requests for material to cover and overall ensure that your individual needs are met as much as is possible. As course instructors, in many ways, we can serve as secondary supervisors to you - so don't hesitate to tell us what you want to learn.
The learning objectives for the seminar component are to:
- Develop oral/written presentation skills,
- Practice writing in APA format

**Evaluation**

The mandatory component of the seminar is worth 35% of the final thesis grade. The mandatory component is comprised of participating in sessions when other students are presenting, participating in class discussions on writing and presentation skills, informal presentation of your project, presenting your thesis proposal, presenting your data analysis, providing a written draft of the final thesis, and presentation of the thesis as a poster on poster day. There will be other non-mandatory components that students could participate in or not (e.g., sessions on applying to grad school, writing GRE’s, scholarship applications, creating posters, and assistance with experimental methodology, analysis, and APA writing style). The thesis supervisor assigns the rest of the grade.

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<tr>
<th>Seminar Director assigns:</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations and Participation in Seminar</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Throughout term, see schedule below</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poster Presentation</td>
<td>5% (marked on a P/F basis)</td>
<td>April 5th, 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis draft for external evaluation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Early April, date to be updated in the winter term.</td>
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All seminar grades (except the poster pass/fail mark) will be assigned according to the following grading scheme:

**DEFINITIONS OF GRADING DESCRIPTIONS:**

**A+ Exceptional.** Through knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill or great originality in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

**A Excellent.** Through knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a high degree of skill and/or some elements of originality in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.
B* Very Good. Through knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a fairly high degree of skill in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

B Good. Good level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

C* Competent. Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

C Fairly Competent. Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with some skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

D* Passing. Slightly better than minimal knowledge of required concepts and/or techniques together with some ability to use them in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.

D Barely Passing. Minimum knowledge of concepts and/or techniques needed to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

E Marginally Failing. Negligible knowledge of concepts and/or techniques needed to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

F Failing. No knowledge of concepts and/or techniques needed to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

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<tr>
<th>Thesis Supervisor assigns:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Draft Introduction and Methods</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>December 23rd (or in consultation with supervisor)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Thesis paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Near the end of April. Due dates to follow.</td>
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Completion of assignments: Proper academic performance in the seminar depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, work for this course must be received on the due date specified. Assignments are to be handed in by the date indicated. There will be no make-up of missed
assignments. Due dates for the draft introduction and final paper components of the thesis will be sent out later in the year.

OTHER IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS
All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the Senate Committee on Curriculum & Academic Standards webpage (see Reports, Initiatives, Documents) - http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/senate_cte_main_pages/ccas.htm
- York’s Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures/Academic Integrity Website
- Ethics Review Process for research involving human participants
- Course requirement accommodation for students with disabilities, including physical, medical, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities
- Student Conduct Standards
- Religious Observance Accommodation

CLASS SCHEDULE

September 12
8:30-10:00
Introduction / Orientation
Open discussion about how this seminar course can best meet your needs
Note: Brown Bag at 2pm (rm 102A) you are invited

September 19
9:00 – 11:00
Applying for research funding

September 26
9:00 – 11:00
A day in the life of a grad student
GRE preparation

October 3: Required Attendance
9:00 – 11:00
Informal presentation of your research topic
During this class each student will be asked to discuss their thesis with the class for 5-10 minutes. The goal is to beginning thinking how best to explain your work to others, to learn what questions others have about your topic, to get suggestions ideas for how to present your work more succinctly.
October 10: No Class

October 17: Required Attendance
9:00-11:00
Writing effective research papers.
During this class we will discuss how to write clear, effective academic papers and how to avoid writing mistakes. In preparation for the class we ask that each of you take note of one particularly well written and one poorly written paper that you have read for your thesis project. Please create an outline of the poor and good paper and take notes about why you think the one succeeds and the other fails to communicate clearly.

October 24
9:00-11:00
Applying to grad school / letters of intent

October 31: Required Attendance
9:00-11:00am
Effective oral presentations
During this class we will watch brief presentations from the website ‘TED – ideas worth spreading’ and then explore the art of presenting together. In preparation for this class we ask that each of you give some thought to what makes for a good academic talk and come prepared to engage in discussion.

November 7: Required Attendance
9:00-11:30am
Oral presentations of thesis proposals
During this class 1/3 of you will be asked to do a 10 min presentation on your thesis. Details regarding expectations will be provided in class

November 14: Required Attendance
9:00-11:30am
Oral presentations of thesis proposals cont.

November 21: Required Attendance
9:00-11:30 am
Oral presentations of thesis proposals cont.
November 28: No class

December 5: No class

No Classes in January

February 6: No Class

February 13
  9:00-11:00am
  Preparing for oral presentations / review expectations

February 20: No class

February 27: Required Attendance
  9:00-11:30
  Oral presentations of results
  During this class 1/3 of you will asked to do a 10 min presentation on the
  results and interpretation of your findings.

March 5: Required Attendance
  9:00-11:30
  Oral presentations cont.

March 12: Required Attendance
  9:00-11:30
  Oral presentations cont.

March 19, 26, and April 2
  9:00-11:00
  On these days Susan and John will be available to meet with students on an
  individual basis if needed to discuss writing

Poster Day: Early April

Final Draft to second reader: Mid April