Dividing into groups

In this version of PSYC 4170, the class will be divided into 3 groups of equal size, each led by one of the 3 staff persons listed above. Group leaders will be in charge of supervision and grading of their students’ research projects.

Students’ assignments to groups will be made as follows: The 3 group leaders will be available during the last hour of each of the first 4 class sessions to talk to individuals informally about their plans for their studies. Students may talk to as many of the group leaders as they wish, and register with the person of their choice when they are ready.

When a group leader’s supervisee list reaches 20, however, it will be closed, and the student will need to make another choice. Students who do not make a choice will be assigned to a vacant slot.

Inasmuch as the departmental computer lab (BSB 158) has limited facilities, the class will also be divided in half to provide two groups for the statistics labs, one meeting at 2:30 to 4 and the other at 4 to 5:30. This will be done in class.

1st semester

Based on the premise that students have completed the prerequisite research methods and statistics courses, there is no required text, but it is expected that students will be reviewing the literature on their topics of choice in preparation for their research proposals.

During the first 6 weeks, there will be a series of lectures on method and theory by the CD, followed by a multiple choice exam. Additionally, a brief demonstration study will be conducted by the class, which will provide the data for the statistics labs to be held in the 2nd semester. There will also be a session on ethical issues in human psychological research, with directions on how to fill out the required ethics form for the research project.

During the last 6 weeks students will meet with their groups in separate seminar rooms (locations to be announced) and present, individually, their proposal outlines. Each presentation will be followed by feedback by the group leader and discussions among course members. Outlines should briefly describe each of the following, in order: (1) hypothesis and theoretical basis, (2) methodology (participants and procedures), (3) statistics to be employed, (4) how the results will be interpreted. Students may read or otherwise present their outlines, but presentations should not exceed 15 minutes. Studies may deal with any area of psychology, and may employ any scientifically acceptable method (e.g. laboratory, naturalistic observation, archival, online) but must represent a test of an original, theoretically based hypothesis.
Proposal

This should not exceed 2500 words, excluding references. It should be posted to the group leader by email attachment, preferably in WORD, on or before Dec 12. References should be properly cited in the text and listed at the close of the paper. The proposal may incorporate material, verbatim or otherwise, presented in the outline, but should also reflect the comments and suggestions of the group leader where applicable. Further comments and suggestions and proposal grades will be posted back to students by the group leader.

Schedule: 1st semester

Sep 8. Introduction to the course.*
Sep 15. Lecture: Research methods.*
Sep 22. Lecture: Theory and hypotheses.*
Sep 29. Lecture: Psychological testing. *
Oct 13 Readings week
Oct 20. Exam (one hour) Research groups will then meet in their seminar rooms with their staff leaders to arrange schedules for individual presentations of proposal outlines. Oct 27 to Dec 1. Individual presentations of proposal outlines (in seminar rooms)

* followed by opportunities for individual student/staff meetings

2nd Semester

Jan 5 Statistics lab (in 158 BSB) (Group 1 at 2:30 - 4. Group 2 at 4-5:30)
Jan 12 Statistics lab continuation – (same times and place)

There will be no formal classes for the balance of the semester. Students will carry out their projects with individual consultations during class hours, as needed, by their group leaders. Details of the consultation process will be distributed and discussed during the latter part of the 1st semester.

Final paper.

This should not exceed 7500 words, excluding references, tables and/or graphs. It should be written in the form of a journal article in terms of organization, writing style and data presentation, using APA or an equivalent format. Any and all material from the proposal may be incorporated, verbatim or otherwise, in the final paper. Final papers should be submitted by email attachment (WORD) to the group leader by April 6, 2012. Comments and grades for the paper and final grades will be posted back to the student.

Grades - The course grade will consist of the exam score, weighted 20%, the outline and written proposal, graded inclusively, weighted 30% and the final paper, weighted 50%. The last date to drop the course without receiving a grade is Feb. 10, 2012.