

PSYC 401: DIRECTED RESEARCH IN PSYCHOLOGY: MORAL JUDGMENT AND BEHAVIOR

Spring 2020 MWF 10:50-11:50 OLRI 370

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Office: OLRI 327 (phone: 696-6112)

Office hours: Wed 1:00-2:00 pm and Thu 1:30-2:30 pm (and by appointment)

Required text: *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition*. (2010).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to immerse you first-hand in conducting psychological research. You will have an opportunity to complete all phases of an independent empirical research project: designing and running a study, analyzing your data, writing up a journal-style manuscript, and presenting your project to the Psychology department and your peers. The course will be challenging — you will submit several drafts of your work throughout the term, modify your writing in response to feedback, and carry out many different research tasks in a short period of time. But it will also be highly fulfilling for you — this is your chance to synthesize your knowledge from previous psychology courses and pursue a project of your own design and execution. It should serve as an invaluable experience upon which to draw in your future endeavors, whether as a producer or consumer of research.

In this particular version of Directed Research, all of your projects will focus on some aspect of moral judgment, cognition, or behavior. You will still have wide latitude to pursue a project that fits your particular interests. But by focusing on content under the same broad umbrella of morality, we'll develop a shared and deeper understanding of terminology, theory, and findings in this area, I'll be able to provide you better guidance as you develop your projects, and you all will be well positioned to give meaningful suggestions for improving each other's work.

Throughout the term, you will turn in drafts of each of the major sections of your paper: Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion. I will give you feedback on these sections, which you will then incorporate in the final version of your paper, which is due on Monday 5/4. You will also present a poster of your research at the Minnesota Undergraduate Psychology Conference (MUPC), which will be held at on Saturday May 2nd right here at Macalester. This is an essential component of the Psychology major at Macalester and is required for graduation. This experience may sound stressful, but you will have several opportunities to practice your presentation and get feedback from me and from your peers. You will give your poster presentation in class on Friday 4/24, followed by a final run-through of your presentation on Monday 4/27. Public presentation of research is an important aspect of scientific discovery, and it will be particularly rewarding to share your hard work and new knowledge in a public forum.

All of your writing in the course should follow APA style. If you do not already own a copy, it is highly recommended that you purchase the APA Publication Manual (6th Edition). We will spend time reviewing the fundamental elements of APA style throughout the term. We will also spend a great deal of time discussing each of the components of your project — how to write your Introduction, Method, Results, Discussion, and Abstract sections, as well as how to effectively design and present a poster. Before you conduct your study itself, you will submit your research proposal to the Psychology Review Board (PRB); the proposal must be approved before you may begin collecting data. As with all other elements, we will spend ample time in class discussing how you can write a logical, thorough, and effective PRB proposal.

Our class is officially scheduled to meet on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10:50-11:50. Typically, though, we will meet together as a group on Mondays in OLRI 370 and I will meet with each of you individually on Wednesdays in my office (OLRI 327). Fridays are reserved for drop-in individual meetings or for additional group meetings, as needed. The meeting schedule on the last page is tentative and will be subject to change depending on the needs of the class. **Block out MWF 10:50-11:50 in your calendar for this class**, even if the schedule doesn't specifically list a meeting.

COMPOSITION OF COURSE GRADE

This course will follow the 'Contract for a B' model. On this model, I lay out basic terms of a contract that you need to follow (see below). If you adhere to the terms of the contract (staying "on contract") throughout the entire semester, you will earn a final grade of **at least a B**. If you do not adhere to the terms of the contract (going "off contract"), you will earn a final grade of **at most a B**.

I will give you lots of feedback on your writing, both as written comments and during our scheduled feedback meetings, but I will not grade your writing until the end of the semester. The goal of this model is to help me deliver timely and useful feedback, to help you revise and improve your writing, and to help all of us shift our focus away from *grades* and onto the *process* of good thinking and writing.

After you have turned in your final paper, I will have an individual conference meeting with each of you. During that meeting, I will give you feedback and your grade. If you are happy with your grade, you can stop there. If you would like a chance to improve your grade, you can edit your paper based on the feedback you have received and re-submit your final paper along with a cover letter describing the changes you have made. There is no guarantee that revising your paper will result in an increase to your grade — it all depends on whether you have adequately addressed the feedback I have given you.

Contract for a B requirements:

- (1) Complete all assignments by their due date [You are allowed to submit one assignment late and still remain on contract. Submitting two late assignments constitutes going off contract. Don't do it!]
- (2) Demonstrate obvious care and effort on each assignment. This includes submitting complete assignments, using proper APA formatting, and proofreading/spellchecking your work
- (3) Attend all course meetings ready to discuss your project and how to make progress
- (4) Thoughtfully respond to and incorporate feedback into your design, analyses, and writing
- (5) Constructively evaluate and critique your own and your peers' research projects

If you stay on contract you'll earn at least a B; if you go off contract you'll earn at most a B. I will evaluate the quality of your completed work (final paper and final poster) to determine the specific grade you receive.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Due date [submit to Moodle by 11:59 pm on the due date]</u>
Conceptual Outline	Wed 2/5
Library session	Mon 2/10 (or sooner)
Introduction draft	Mon 2/17
Method draft	Mon 2/24
PRB proposal draft	Wed 2/26
Final PRB	Wed 3/4
Results draft	Mon 4/6
Discussion draft	Mon 4/13
Poster draft	Mon 4/20
Final poster	Mon 4/27
Final paper	Mon 5/4

In your first assignment, the Conceptual Outline, you will sketch your plans for your project and the research on which it draws. To help you find relevant literature for your project, you must meet with Beth Hillemann or Aaron Albertson, our Psychology Reference Librarians, by no later than Mon 2/10. To schedule your meeting, you can submit a request (<https://www.macalester.edu/library/askus/refconsult/>).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. See the Student Handbook (www.macalester.edu/internal/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/03academicpolicies/03-05academicintegrity.html) for guidelines about what constitutes plagiarism, cheating, and forgery and how to avoid these serious offenses. Please talk to me if you are unclear how these guidelines apply to this course. Academic dishonesty will be reported to the Director of Academic Programs and will result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially for the course.

COURSE ACCOMMODATIONS

I am committed to ensuring access to course content for students. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Contact the Disability Services office by emailing disabilityservices@macalester.edu, or calling 651-696-6974 to schedule an appointment to discuss your individual needs. It is important to meet as early in the semester as possible; this will ensure that your accommodations can be implemented early on. Further information about disability services and accommodations can be found at: <http://www.macalester.edu/studentaffairs/disabilityservices>

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

I encourage you to make your well-being a priority throughout this semester and your career at Macalester. Investing time into taking care of yourself will help you more fully engage in and benefit from your academic experience. Beyond being a student, you are a human being carrying your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities with you. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, physical, cultural, financial, etc., and how they can have an impact on your academic experience. I encourage you to remember that sleeping, moving your body, and connecting with others can be strategies to help you increase your well-being and remain resilient. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or to find support from reach out to one of the resources listed in the [Health and Wellness Resource guide](#) on Moodle.

OVERVIEW OF MEETINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Date	Meeting Type	Assignment
Fri 1/24	Introduction to the class	
Mon 1/27	Group Meeting (OLRI 370)	
Wed 1/29	Individual Meeting (OLRI 327)	
Mon 2/3	Group	
Wed 2/5	Individual	Conceptual Outline due Wed 2/5
Mon 2/10	Group	Meet with Beth or Aaron by Mon 2/10
Wed 2/12	Individual	
Mon 2/17	Group	Introduction Draft due Mon 2/17
Wed 2/19	Individual	
Fri 2/21	Qualtrics tutorial (OLRI 349)	
Mon 2/24	Group	Method Draft due Mon 2/24
Wed 2/26	Individual	PRB Proposal due Wed 2/26
Mon 3/2	Group	
Wed 3/4	Individual	Final PRB due Wed 3/4
Mon 3/9	Group	
Wed 3/11	Individual	
Spring Break		
Mon 3/23	Group	
Wed 3/25	Individual	
Mon 3/30	Group	
Wed 4/1	Individual	
Mon 4/6	Group	Results due Mon 4/6
Wed 4/8	Individual	
Mon 4/13	Group	Discussion Draft due Mon 4/13
Wed 4/15	Individual	
Mon 4/20	Group	Poster Draft due Mon 4/20
Wed 4/22	Individual	
Fri 4/24	Group (Poster Presentations)	
Mon 4/27	Group (Poster Presentations)	Final Poster due Mon 4/27
Wed 4/29	Individual	
Sat 5/2	MUPC (at Macalester!)	
Mon 5/4	Group: MUPC and course debrief	Final Paper due Mon 5/4