

**PSY 401: ADVANCED RESEARCH (SENIOR SEMINAR)
Fall 2008**

Website: <http://psych.hanover.edu/classes/seniors/>

Meeting Time & Place: MWF, 11-11:50am SCC 147	Faculty contact information		
	John Krantz*	x7316	krantzj@hanover.edu
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*address general questions about the course to John			

Overview and Course Objectives

With your participation, we expect this course to:

1. engage you in advanced issues of research and design
2. provide practice in the art of collaboration via close interaction with your colleagues
3. develop critical thinking as applied to psychological research
4. prepare you for the empirical project you will conduct next semester

The Empirical Research Project

By the end of this academic year (winter term) you will have developed, conducted, analyzed and reported your own research project. This project will be conducted either individually or with one other person.

This Fall you will develop and write a formal research proposal including an introduction, method section, proposed analyses section, and detailed (week-by-week) timeline for conducting the project during the next term. By the end of the Fall term, all the materials you will need to conduct your research in the Winter term should be collected and prepared. This project needs to be an advanced piece of research; by that we mean a project with more depth than the projects you have conducted as part of coursework in Research Methods or other classes. It should be equivalent in scale to an "Independent Study."

Note: It is expected that you will work in pairs on your projects. If you wish to work individually, you will need to justify your choice. At the end of the first week, you will submit to the faculty the name of your partner (who should be in agreement) or write a justification for working alone. The department faculty will then decide the pairing. You will need compelling reasons to work alone.

Detailed Information about Assignments and Course Activities

Research Journal / Retrospective Report. You have a choice of keeping a weekly journal or writing a retrospective paper at the end of the course.

1. If you choose the *journal* option, you should keep a weekly record of your progress – thoughts on the project, the challenges you encounter, how you overcame them, choices you made which helped move you forward, etc. Each journal entry should be at least half a page in length. The journal should reflect the development of your ideas rather than simply catalog your ideas. The evaluation of your journal will be based upon how well you show the development of your ideas.
2. Alternatively, you may elect to write a *7-10 page retrospective* in which you reflect on your experiences in 401. What have you learned about conducting research? What were some of the important challenges you faced in completing your project? Knowing what you know now, what do you wish you had known when you were beginning 401?

Week 1: Prepare for the semester

At the end of Week 1, we need to know whether you will partner or if you wish to work on your project alone. This information is to be emailed to John by 11 on Friday.

Week 2: Global Topic Ideas

Email John by 11 on Friday a paragraph or two listing the one or two global research areas you are considering for your project (e.g., under cognition – attention, under social psychology – influence, under mental illness – schizophrenia). Additionally, you should come to class having conducted an examination of recent years' senior projects (see Psychology Library or department website for copies), and a general perusal of relevant PsycINFO literature for the topic area(s) you are interested in.

Week 3: First ideas presentation / Initial list of references & rough research ideas

You will be leading a discussion with a small group about the steps you've taken so far. Your presentation should include the following: what was the global topic that interested you and how you narrowed it down; where your interest came from; what you've done to research that interest (e.g., a lit search, including how you conducted it); what problems you've encountered so far; and what you learned so far. You should aim to have read at least three articles or book chapters on your topic by this point. You should plan to facilitate / direct the conversation, and you should have organized information and questions for your classmates that will generate a helpful conversation about your ideas. However, do not feel pressured to have a complete study worked out at this point.

Also, you need to email to each member of the department an initial list of at least 10 references (properly formatted in APA style) that you have reviewed or at least read the abstract for. Include a brief paragraph describing your basic, preliminary research ideas at the top of the page.

Weeks 4 & 5: Conferences with Faculty

During scheduled class time (and outside class time as needed), you will meet at least 3 faculty members to discuss your ideas. Each faculty member will have a copy of your global interests, and your preliminary ideas with reference list. However, come prepared to explain your thesis thoughts and ask questions. We will track how many faculty you meet with and this will figure in your participation grade. Meetings typically run 30 minutes.

By Friday, 10/3, email each member of the department a 1-page paper describing (1) your research project with a tentative hypothesis and (2) the two faculty members you feel you could work most effectively with on your project. We will read and take any comments you have into account. We will use these papers along with your other interactions with the faculty to assign you to your faculty thesis advisor. You will spend the next several weeks working with that advisor to develop your proposal. To every extent possible, both student and faculty needs will be considered when assigning pairings (but do note that it is unlikely we'll be able to make everyone happy).

On Monday, 9/29, the class will meet to hear a presentation about careers by Margaret Krantz, Director of the Career Center. On Friday, 10/3, the class will meet in the computer lab, SCC 148, to be introduced to web-based research methods, including a tool to assist in the development of web surveys.

Week 6: Research Idea Discussions, Research Hypothesis & Advisor Preference

You will lead a small group discussion of your or your team's research idea as it is at this point in time. Note: both members of a team are expected to be active presenters. Bring a hard copy of your current hypothesis research question, the citation information and abstracts for 5 articles and a paragraph discussing how these articles are relevant to your intended study. The relevance may be in terms of how they influence your theoretical ideas or how they are influencing your ideas about your research method or if they suggest measures you might use or take. It is important that these articles are really relevant to your project as it stands at this point in time. The document should be emailed to the faculty member and students who will be meeting with you by 5 pm on the day before you meet. Peers' email addresses are available in the Coursemates section of MyHanover. The goal of this discussion is to help you refine your current thinking about your project, so think of how this group can help you improve your project idea.

Actual advisor assignments will be announced Fri of this week.

Weeks 7-8: Advisor Meetings, Prepare for Presentation

During weeks 7 and 8 we will not meet as a class. Instead, you should arrange a regular weekly meeting time with your advisor to discuss your proposed study. You and your thesis advisor should begin immediately to work very closely together to nail down and whip into shape the study that you want to do. During these weeks, you should 1) be preparing to present your proposal to the class (see below), 2) begin working on the first written draft of your proposal, 3) track down any materials (e.g., questionnaires, stimuli) you will need for your project, and 4) submit your journal to your advisor as a progress check (if you're keeping a journal). If you are not keeping a journal, this may be a good time to start drafting your retrospective report.

Weeks 9-11: Presentations

At some point during these weeks you will make a **formal presentation** of your research ideas so that your classmates can help you refine and anticipate problems with your design. You need to indicate the background research of the proposal, the methods for the project, a rough idea of how you will analyze your data, and the timeline for completing the project. Of course, some aspects of this proposal may be rough and some aspects of your design will change (perhaps dramatically) as a result of the feedback you receive. However, you should consider this a serious design proposal and consider yourself a moderator of the discussion of the proposal. Have questions ready if necessary to prompt your classmates' feedback. You will have 15 – 20 minutes for your presentation & discussion. This is a letter-graded assignment.

*Note: typically these presentations are made using PowerPoint. The PowerPoint file needs to be emailed to John the day before your presentation.

*First draft of proposal and materials. Turn in the first draft of your written research proposal and the materials you will need (e.g., questionnaires) to your thesis advisor by Friday of this week. This is un-graded but required and will figure in to participation grade.

Week 12: Second Draft of Proposal due MONDAY

By Monday of this week submit the second draft of your proposal to your advisor. . Your grade on this assignment accounts for current quality *and* progress from first draft. Pace your work as the semester progresses! Also note that standards for grading drafts are generally different than those for final papers. A high grade on a draft does not necessarily translate into a high grade on a final paper.

On the Day the Final is Scheduled for PSY401: Proposal, Journal

Written Proposal Due. At the end of the term you will submit a detailed, APA style proposal that will include a full literature review, method section, proposed results and a timeline. More details on this will be provided later.

Research Journal or Retrospective Report due to your Thesis Advisor.

Schedule

Week	Deadline
1 9/1-9/5	Course and Year Introduction Class meeting Monday Faculty research presentations on Wednesday No class Friday Look for partner Look at past senior thesis reports (on bookshelf in SC 147 and on department website: http://psych.hanover.edu/classes/seniors/) Indicate partner or write justification on working alone.
2 9/8-9/1 2	Present preliminary topic ideas in large group Class Meeting Monday. Others as needed Begin literature search, request ILLs Global project area due Fri of this week
3 9/15-9/ 19	Present initial ideas in small groups MEETINGS WILL BE ARRANGED BY YOUR FACULTY LEADER Continue literature search, request ILLs; Read literature, take notes 10+ references and specific idea paragraph due Fri of this week
4 and 5 9/22-10 /3	Meet individually with 3+ faculty members about specific ideas Monday 9/29 Class meets to hear presentation by Career Center: Margaret Krantz Wednesday 10/1 Class meets to be introduced to web-based research methods (Friday will be used as well if we run over) No regular class meetings rest of time. Submit two choices for faculty advisor and description of research question: 300-1000 words (1-3 double-spaced pages) by Fri of Week 5 Continue literature search, request ILLs; Read literature, take notes
6 10/6-10 /10	Small group discussions of research ideas Literature Summary: You will bring to the group a hard copy of your research question, 5 references with their abstracts (obtainable through PsycINFO) and a summary paragraph on how each article relates to your project. MEETINGS WILL BE ARRANGED BY YOUR FACULTY LEADER Continue literature search, request ILLs; Read literature, take notes Begin work on first draft: title page, references page, outline of Methods section <i>Actual advisor assignments announced Fri of this week</i>
7 10/13-1 0/17	Meet with advisor No regular class meeting Submit journal to advisor for progress check, if keeping journal Continue work on first draft: outline of Introduction section – put hypothesis last, and review previous literature related to hypothesis; fill out Methods section. Track down any necessary questionnaires or study materials Continue literature search, request ILLs; Read literature, take notes
8 10/20-1 0/24	Meet with advisor and check on progress Fall Break Mon of this week; No regular class meeting Work on presentations Continue work on first draft: turn outline into prose; create table, figure, or statement of expected results. Work on questionnaire / study materials Continue literature search, request ILLs; Read literature, take notes

Week	Deadline
9 10/27-1 0/31	Presentations begin Meet in class all scheduled days Ask questions during presentations Submit first draft of proposal and copy of all materials to advisor by Fri of this week Continue literature search, request ILLs; Read literature, take notes
10 11/3-11 /7	Presentations Meet in class all scheduled days Ask questions during presentations Read literature, take notes First drafts returned by Fri of this week
11 11/10-1 1/14	Presentations Meet in class all scheduled days Ask questions during presentations Revise first draft Read literature, take notes
12 11/17-1 1/21	Presentations Monday Meet in class all scheduled days Submit second draft Mon of this week Ask questions during presentations
13 11/24-1 1/28	Meet with advisor No regular class meeting Second drafts returned by Fri of this week Pilot test study by having friends go through procedure Read literature, take notes Thanksgiving Break Wed & Friday of this week
14 12/1-12 /5	Meet with advisor No regular class meeting Revise second draft
Finals 12/8-12 /12	Submit Proposal to advisor and second reader. Submit journal or retrospective report to advisor

Grading

	Percentage of Final Grade
Midterm progress	5
Proposal presentation	15
Second draft of proposal	15
Research Journal / Retrospective Report	10
Class attendance, participation, & making regular progress on project	15
Written Proposal	40
TOTAL	100

Letter Grades

Letter grade interpretations are given by the following interpretation of the final average:

Grade	%	Grade	%
A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	0-59

Late Penalties

To encourage timely preparation, there is a penalty for assignments that are submitted late. Assignments submitted after class on the day they were due will receive a -10% penalty. An additional -10% penalty will accrue with each additional day late.

Attendance & Participation

Since we have arranged this course so that each of you will benefit from each other's input, it is vital that you attend all classes and participate fully. Your participation will be "graded" because we'd like to emphasize its importance and give credit to your important efforts in this area. Listen carefully, ask questions when you are confused or have a helpful suggestion, and work hard to elicit feedback from other students when you are responsible for leading the discussion.