

STUDENT INVESTIGATION – PSYC 4104EL01 2006-2007

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Grading:

Oral Proposal	10%	October – November, 2006
Written Proposal	10%	December 11th, 2006
Participation	10%	
Oral Defense	15%	March, 2007
Thesis Document	55%	April, 2007

Course Description:

The goal of the thesis course is to have the fourth year student plan, design and conduct a research study independently. It will challenge the student to perform an original research project using all the skills they have gained during their time in university.

Design:

All designs must be experimental or quasi-experimental. Correlational designs will not be accepted for this course. All designs should have at least two independent variables and two dependent variables. In general, experimental designs should have strong scientific merit, and be achievable within the time frame given, and with the material and subjects available to the students.

Proposal:

Each student must present their research design orally to the class. The presentation should be approximately 10 minutes with 10 minutes being allowed for questions from the instructors and fellow students.

- Students must meet with **one** of the instructors **at least one week before** the proposal to go over their design. Students are required to have a one or two page outline prepared for this meeting. Further instructions on the expectations of the presentation will be given in class.
- Students will distribute a one to two page outline to the class. It will outline the hypotheses and methodological design of their study, as well as the general statistical analyses they will use.

Written Proposal:

Each student must submit complete introduction and method sections of their thesis by December 11th. The expectations of this write up will be clarified in class, but in general, it is an introduction based on a comprehensive literature review of the study's topic area. It will outline the hypotheses and relevant background material. The method section will be a typical method section that outlines the methodology used to perform the study. Students are also expected to complete an **Ethics Approval Form** within a week following their proposal. Details will be provided in class.

Participation:

Each student is expected to attend all the classes, including all proposals of other students, and all oral defenses of the class. Each student is also judged on the effort they make in and out of class on their research projects.

Oral Defense

These **public** defenses will be held on Wednesday and Friday afternoons at the end of the Winter semester. The student is required to give a 15-minute presentation on their study and the results they obtained (with full statistical analysis of the data). This will be followed by a 15 minute question and answer period. Students will be graded on the quality of their presentation as well as their ability to handle the questions they are asked.

Thesis:

The final thesis document will be due one week after the end of classes in April. It is expected to be a professional paper based on the student's research study, with a full literature review, methodology, statistical analysis and discussion of the results and implications of the study. It will be marked by the two course instructors as well as the student's thesis supervisor (if they have one). **Students are strongly encouraged to find a thesis advisor.**

Class time will be used for the student's proposals and also:

- Review of experimental design
- How to perform a literature review
- Ethics and Ethics approval forms
- Presentation guidelines and tips
- How to write a thesis
- Statistical analyses
- Using computer statistical programs (that use a **Windows** platform)