Today’s Session

REG Coordinator & Ethics Administrator

– Michelle Manios, PAS 3013, regadmin@uwaterloo.ca

Library liaison

– Tim Ireland PAS 3013, regadmin@uwaterloo.ca

Psych 499 Coordinator

– Richard Eibach, PAS 3053, reibach@uwaterloo.ca
The Honours Thesis is a unique opportunity

– apprenticeship in how to conduct research from developing a hypothesis to writing an empirical paper

– individual interaction and collaboration with faculty member & graduate students

– capstone experience for undergraduate honours degree

– essential preparation for graduate studies
General Remarks

Finding Information on Psych Dept. Webpage
  ‣ Current Undergrad Students
    ‣ Courses
      ‣ Psych 499 A/B/C

Information on:
  – Honours thesis handbook (updated)
  – Orientation meetings
  – Deadlines & important dates
  – Oral Presentation Schedule
  – Contact information
  – And more….. (e.g., where to find a sample thesis)
Agenda

• Course enrolment
• Supervisors
• Course format/tasks
• Common problems
• Additional opportunities
Psych ave. of 82%, plus completion of

- PSYCH 391
- one of: PSYCH 389/390; 392-399, 483, 484

Contact potential supervisors when you’re officially enrolled in 499A
Contact faculty members after you’ve enrolled in Psych 499A

You might have to ask several different profs

Ordinarily, first make email contact with:

- Unofficial transcript
- Statement of interest (why do you want to work with this particular faculty member)
- What terms you hope to enroll in Psych 499A/B/C
- Request an appointment to meet in person
Selecting a thesis topic

– Consider an on-going project in faculty member’s lab or suggest an topic of your own

– If suggesting your own topic be prepared to explain

  • why this topic interests you

  • what you’ve already read on this topic

  • Note: topic needs to be narrow enough to develop a clear research question and specific, testable hypotheses
Supervisor styles

- Some are structured, others less so
- Up to you to establish and maintain regular contact with supervisor
- Plan accordingly if supervisor is going on sabbatical
- Be sure to clarify and manage expectations
  - How often will you check in (& virtually or f-to-f)?
  - Level of independence expected
  - Deadlines
Supervisors are useful to you beyond the thesis

- Letters of reference
- Information about:
  - applying for scholarships
  - applying to grad programs
There are 3 components:

- 499A: literature review, research question(s), & thesis reviewer nominations
- 499B: research design, proposal, & presentation
- 499C: data collection, analysis, & final write-up

Psych 499 can take 2 to 5 terms

- Many students complete in 2 terms (499A/B in term 1, 499C in term 2)
- Up to 5 terms might be necessary for coop students

Be flexible
Email name of thesis supervisor by **May 10** to Nadine Quehl: nquehl@uwaterloo.ca

**If taking 499A alone first**

- Submit **progress report** to Richard Eibach’s mailbox by noon on **August 11th**
- Email Thesis reviewer nominations to Richard (reibach@uwaterloo.ca) by **July 25th**
- Complete your presentation in PSYCH 499B term
5-10 pages
General statement about research area
Brief description of relevant literature
Research question
Outline of further steps
If taking 499A&B concurrently

- Email Thesis reviewer nominations to Richard (reibach@uwaterloo.ca) by May 14th
- TIP: book 499B presentation slot early!
- If you COMPLETE 499B, then you do NOT need to submit 499A progress report
- If you do not complete 499B, you MUST complete progress report (follow PSYCH 499 only schedule)
Reviewer responsibilities:

- read research proposal, attend 499B presentation, and provide feedback
- read final thesis paper
- help assign final grade

Thesis reviewer nominations

Email the following to Richard, reibach@uwaterloo.ca

- brief description of thesis topic (approx. 50 words)
- names of 3 faculty members who you’re nominating as reviewer

Richard will contact faculty members to find out if they’re available
PSYCH 499B Research proposal

- Due 2 business days before your oral presentation date (e.g., Thurs 4:30 pm for Tues presentation)
- 10-15 pages
- Title, Abstract
- Concise background literature review & clear statement of research questions/hypotheses
- Method (measures/experimental procedures)
- Expected results & data analysis plan
- Proposed timeline to complete project
- Approved by supervisor (signed) and submitted to mailbox of your thesis reviewer
Oral presentation for 499B

- 50 min; talk 20-25 min; remainder for discussion
- PowerPoint format
- Explain your rationale, purpose, methods, and hypotheses
- Not formally graded
- Reviewer will ask general questions, probe your knowledge, make suggestions
- Attend other students’ presentations to familiarize yourself with format and practice in advance and

(Note: Presentation before data collection)
PSYCH 499C tasks

– Ethics approval (or end of 499B)
– Data collection
– Analysis
– Write up (more on next slide)
Final PSYCH 499C thesis paper

- Due by **August 11th**
- 20-30 pages
- Title, Abstract, Introduction, Literature Review & Hypotheses, Method, Results, General Discussion, References, Tables & Figures, Appendices
- Submit electronic version to Nadine Quehl: nquehl@uwaterloo.ca
- Graded by Supervisor who comments and suggests a grade range, and 499 Reviewer, who comments and assigns final grade
  - same grade applied retroactively to 499A/B/C
Common Problems

Don’t allow enough time for:

- ethics clearance
- data collection
- data analysis
- writing multiple drafts of the final product

Final product is not APA format or is missing:

- abstract
- introduction/overview before literature review
- clear and specific statement of hypotheses
- writing for a general psych audience
Ontario Undergraduate Psychology Thesis Conference - at U. of Waterloo in 2019!

- informal forum for students in Ontario to present their theses
- poster or oral presentation to a friendly, enthusiastic audience
- discuss your work with peers who have similar interests

- No registration fee for presenters & lunch is provided
- Opportunity to network with students and faculty at other universities
- Participants report that event is very worthwhile and enjoyable
- Great experience to list on grad school applications
Who Can Answer Questions

Nadine Quehl, Psych 499 course administrator

- Paperwork (enrolment, extensions, etc.)
- Scheduling 499B presentation
- Email: nquehl@uwaterloo.ca

Richard Eibach, Thesis Coordinator

- Should I be taking the thesis?
- Issues with your supervisor
- Email: reibach@uwaterloo.ca

Your thesis supervisor

- Research question & literature, designing your study, analyzing data, writing final product
Recognize exceptional performance throughout all stages of the thesis project

Awarded annually in June for theses completed the prior three terms

Nominated by Supervisor
You are responsible for following research integrity standards and university policies

Information/resources about responsible research conduct, FAQs etc.

https://uwaterloo.ca/research/office-research-ethics/research-integrity
Free training available to anyone with a UW email address

https://uwaterloo.ca/research/office-research-ethics/research-integrity/training-and-resources
Review UW’s Graduate academic integrity module

- Useful information about properly identifying sources, collaborating with integrity, honestly recording/reporting findings

https://uwaterloo.ca/library/get-assignment-and-research-help/academic-integrity/graduate-students-and-academic-integrity
2–Minute Thesis Option

Consider creating a short "video snapshot" of your work.

– Great way to tell others about your thesis & your experience at UW
– Create a 1-2 min. video where you explain what you researched and what you found out
– Use a smartphone or Department’s video camera

Logistics

– Make your video after you submit 499C paper (within 2 weeks please)
– You are responsible for emailing your video to Nadine Quehl (nquehl@uwaterloo.ca)
– We will review, upload to the Psych Dept. website, and let you know when you can share the link with others

Note: Completing a video is optional

– Whether or not you choose to capture your thesis on video will in no way affect your grade in PSYCH 499 or eligibility for thesis awards