Psych 499 A-B-C
Orientation meeting
Tuesday, January 10, 2017
Today’s Session

- **Psych 499 Coordinator**
  - Richard Eibach, PAS 3053, reibach@uwaterloo.ca

- **REG Coordinator & Ethics Administrator**
  - Michelle Manios, PAS 3013, regadmin@uwaterloo.ca

- **Psychology Library Liaison**
  - Tim Ireland, tireland@library.uwaterloo.ca
General Remarks

• **The Honours Thesis is a unique opportunity**
  
  – apprenticeship in how to conduct research from inception to completion
  
  – individual interaction and collaboration with faculty member and 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

- Supervisors
- Course format
- Common mistakes
- Additional opportunities
• Finding a supervisor
  – Contact faculty members after you’ve enrolled in Psych 499A
  – You might have to ask several different profs
  – Ordinarily, make email contact first 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 the faculty member’s lab or suggesting an idea of your own

- If suggesting your own topic,
  
  - Be prepared to explain why this topic interests you
  - What you have already read on this topic
  - Topic needs to be narrow enough to develop a clear research question and specific, testable hypotheses
Supervision styles

- Some are structured, others less so
- Up to you to establish and maintain regular contact with your supervisor
- Plan accordingly if your 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
  - Due dates
Supervisors are useful to you beyond the thesis

- Letters of reference
- Information about:
  • applying for scholarships
  • applying to graduate programs
Course Format

- Psych 499 enrollment requires a Psych cumulative average of 82%

- Only contact potential supervisors when you’re officially enrolled in 499A
• 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
Course Format, cont’d

- **Registering for 499A vs. 499A&B**
  - Email name of thesis supervisor by Jan. 12 to Nadine Quehl: nquehl@uwaterloo.ca

- **499A only** –
  - Submit progress report to Richard Eibach’s mailbox by noon on April 25th
  - Email Thesis reviewer nominations to Richard (reibach@uwaterloo.ca) by April 3rd
  - Complete your presentation the following term
499A&B –

- Email Thesis reviewer nominations to Richard (reibach@uwaterloo.ca) by Jan. 20th
- If you COMPLETE 499B, then you do NOT need to hand in 499A progress report
- If you do not complete 499B even though registered for it, you MUST complete progress report
- TIP: book 499B presentation slot early!

- At the end of 499C you will submit your final thesis
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

Reviewer responsibilities:

- read and attend 499B proposal presentation and provide feedback
- read 499C thesis paper
- help assign final grade
• **Progress Report 499A**
  - 5-10 pages
  - General statement about research area
  - A brief description of relevant literature
  - The research question
  - Outline of further steps
Research Proposal 499B

- Due 2 business days before your oral presentation date (Thurs 4:30pm for a Tues presentation)
- 10-15 pages
- Title, Abstract
- Concise background literature & clear statement of research questions/hypotheses
- Method (measures/experimental procedures)
- Expected Results
  - Plans for data analysis & 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
- Use PowerPoint; Practice in advance
- 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

(Note: Oral presentation before data collection)
Course Issues

- 499C
  - Ethics approval (or end of 499B)
  - Data collection
  - Analysis
  - Write up (more on next slide)
• Final Report 499C
  – Due by April 25th
  – 20-30 pages
  – Title, Abstract, Introduction, Literature Review & Hypotheses, Method, Results, General Discussion, References, Tables & Figures, Appendices
  – Submit an electronic version and print copy 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
• Reminder:

- Lots to do in each phase, so don’t fall behind
• 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/training-and-resources
You are responsible for following research integrity standards and university policies

- Strongly recommend that you 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](https://uwaterloo.ca/library/get-assignment-and-research-help/academic-integrity/graduate-students-and-academic-integrity)
  - CITI’s free, online course provides training in Responsible Conduct of Research that you can access with UW email address:
    - [https://www.citiprogram.org/index.cfm?pageID=265](https://www.citiprogram.org/index.cfm?pageID=265)
Common Mistakes

• **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
- an informal forum for students in Ontario to present a summary of their theses
- either orally or in poster format
- to a friendly and enthusiastic audience of peers and to discuss your work with others who have similar interests

Typically end of April or early May (abstract due earlier)

No registration fee for presenters or faculty members and lunch is provided

Opportunity to network with Psychology students and faculty at other universities

Participants report that the event is very worthwhile and enjoyable

Looks great on graduate school applications

Next location: University of Ottawa!
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
• **Thesis Awards**
  
  – Recognize exceptional performance throughout all stages of the thesis project
  
  – Awarded annually in June for theses completed the prior three terms
  
  – Nominated by Supervisor
• **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